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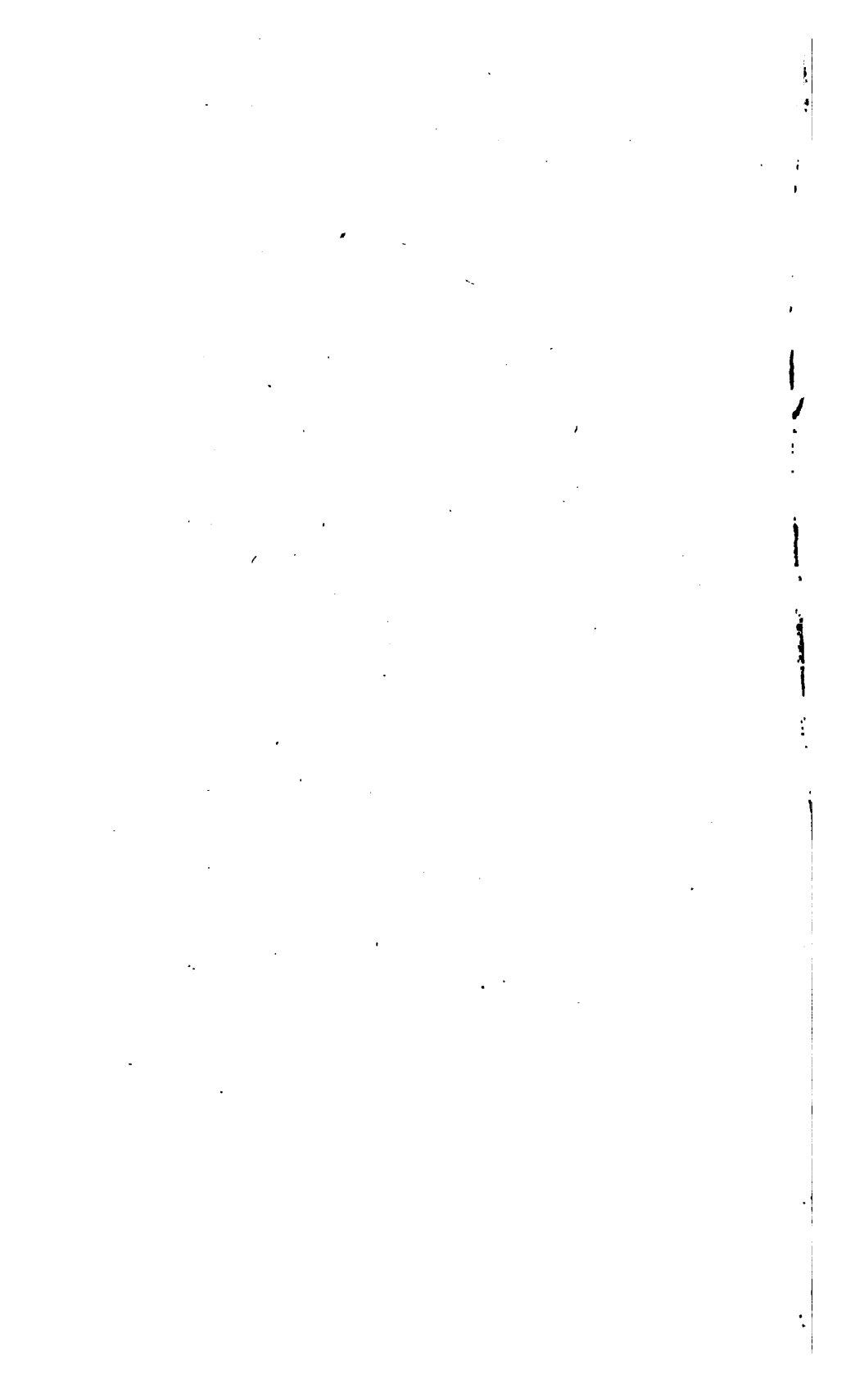
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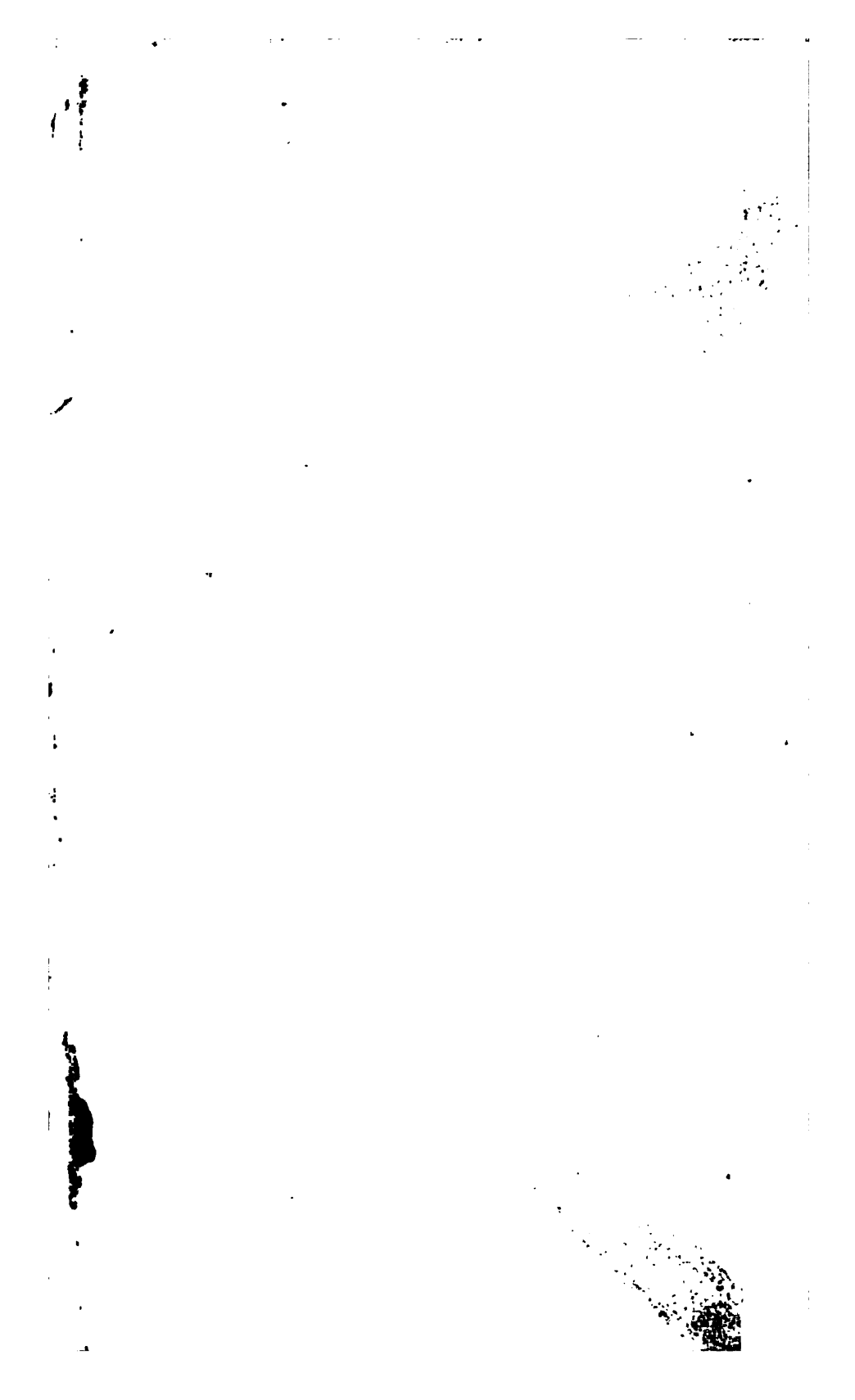




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Illustration by J. G. Thompson



THE HISTORY OF THE LIFE OF THE LATE KING OF FRANCE

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1828.



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REIGN OF GEORGE III.

TO WHICH IS PREFIXED,
A VIEW OF THE PROGRESSIVE IMPROVEMENT OF ENGLAND,
IN PROSPERITY AND STRENGTH; TO THE
ACCESSION OF HIS MAJESTY.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

BY ROBERT BISSETT, LL. D.

AUTHOR OF THE "LIFE OF BURKE," &c.

A NEW EDITION,

BROUGHT DOWN TO THE DEATH OF THE KING.

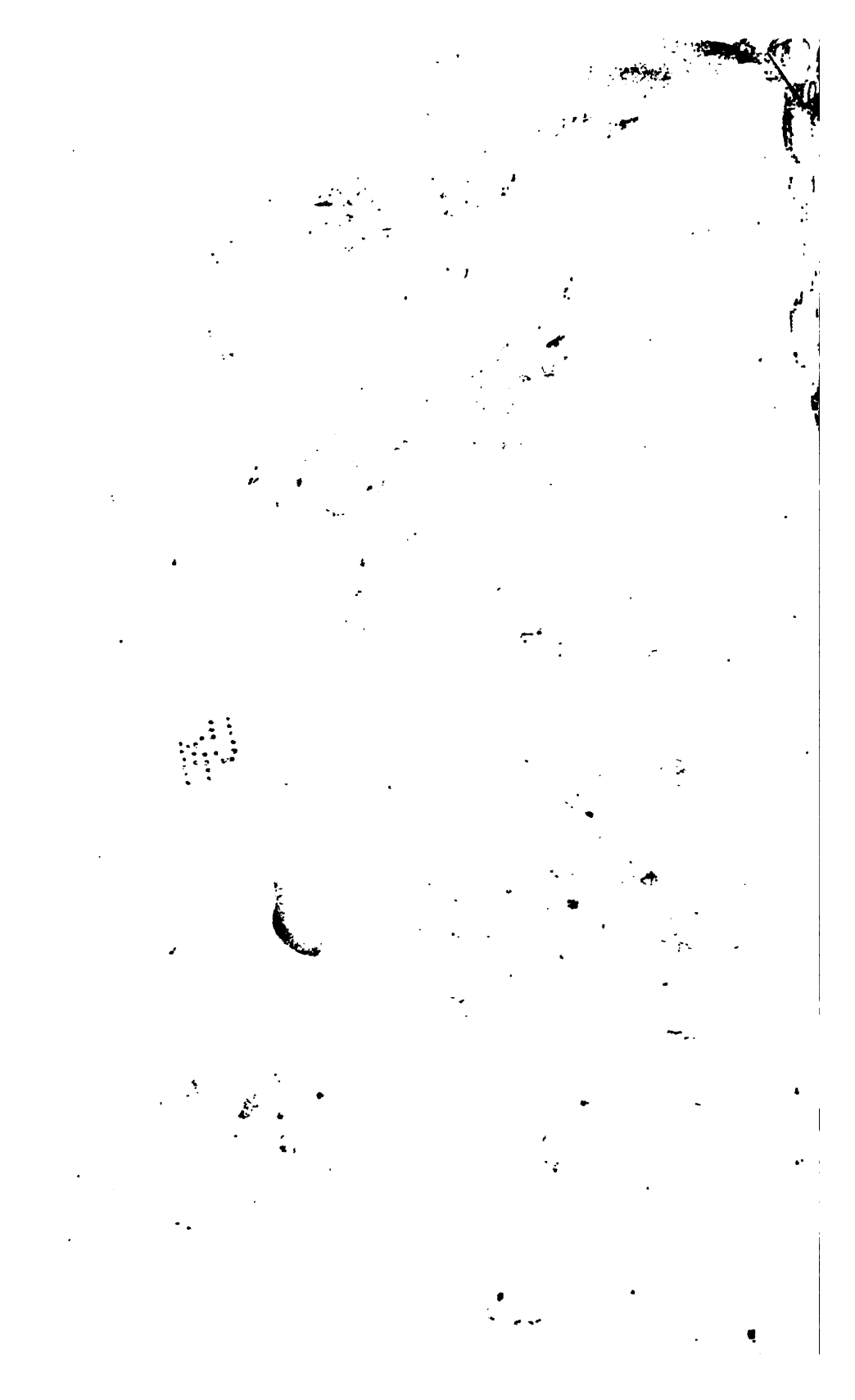
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INTRODUCTION.

Progressive Improvement of England—in Internal Prosperity and Strength—in
Estimation and Importance among Foreign Powers.

ANCIENT writers agree, in supposing that the first inhabitants of Britain migrated from the continent. This opinion is founded on their language, manners, institutions, religion, and complexion; in which they closely resemble the neighbouring Celts. Their governments, though monarchical, were free; they were under the guidance of druidical superstition; their only records were the songs of their bards. They were divided into a number of petty states, inspired with mutual jealousy, and respectively agitated by internal dissensions: but though similar to the continental Gauls in civil and religious establishments, and in general character, yet being farther removed from the centre of civilization, they were still more barbarous in their manners. Their possessions and their wants were equally limited; they were ignorant of the refinements of life. Subsisting by the chase, by pasturage, and imperfect agriculture; clothed with the skins of beasts, which their fields and forests supplied, and dwelling in huts raised in their woods and marshes, they neither sought nor knew the pleasures of foreign luxury. In this uncultivated state, they discovered that masculine boldness and strength of character, by which their successors have been distinguished in all the stages of progressive improvement. Ready and willing to contribute whatever efforts their country might require, they spurned at compulsion. The commons retained a greater degree of power than among their Gallic kinsmen. Like all European barbarians, warlike and ferocious, they exercised their prowess in insular contentions, without attempting to interfere in the affairs of the continent. Their military force consisted in their infantry, which wanted only discipline and skill to have opposed with effect even the Roman legions. Intestine divisions facilitated the progress of the enemy's armies under the conduct and wisdom of Agricola. Chased from the verdant and fertile fields of southern Britain, liberty sought, found, and preserved an asylum in the bleak and barren fastnesses of Caledonia. The victor, in conformity to the Roman system, having subjugated the defenders of their country, from mildness of disposition and soundness of policy, endeavoured to render the chains which he had imposed, easy and agreeable. He taught them the Roman language and manners, instructed them in letters and science, and inspired them with a relish for the accommodations and luxuries of polished life. That both the new acquisition, and the

VOL. VII.—1

[Romans evacuate Britain. Picts, Scots, and Saxons.]

legions which defended it, might be secure from the northern incursions of the unconquered mountaineers, he formed a line of posts along the Scottish isthmus. Defended by these and subsequent fortifications, protected by the conqueror's forces, acquiescing willingly in the dominion of their masters, more effectually and durably subdued by their arts than their arms, the once bold, hardy, and independent Britons became the timid, effeminate, and servile subjects of the Roman empire. Detached from the continent, this province enjoyed profound tranquillity, long after the irruptions of northern barbarians had pervaded the other parts of the empire. The skilful avarice of its conquerors discovered many of the advantages of Britain; the general fertility of its soil; the richness of its pastures; the abundance of its flocks, secure from wild beasts and venomous serpents; the value of its minerals; the number and conveniences of its harbours, equally adapted to commerce and defence. From her civilized subduers, Britain first learned the powers which she possessed, and which, inspired by liberty, and enlightened by knowledge, she has since carried to so unparalleled an extent.

The progress of northern invaders at length compelled the emperors of now enervated Rome to recall their legions from distant frontiers, that they might defend the metropolis. Valuable as Britain was, they were necessitated to evacuate that island for ever. Debilitated by long peace, and dejected by long slavery, the southern Britons had now to encounter ferocious foes, against whom the strength of Roman fortifications, and the dread of Roman discipline, had hitherto afforded them sufficient protection. The Picts and Scots, who dwelt in the northern parts beyond the wall of Antoninus, made incursions upon their peaceable and effeminate neighbours; and beside the temporary depredations which they committed, these combined nations threatened the whole province with subjection, or what the inhabitants more dreaded, with universal plunder and devastation.* Unable to defend themselves, the Britons applied for assistance to their late masters. A single legion sent to their succour freed their country from its desultory invaders; and, having effected its deliverance, again returned to the continent. The Britons were once more exposed to the inroads of their impetuous neighbours. Still too little inured to war, to recover the valour of their ancestors, they again sought security from foreign protectors.

Stretched along the coasts of northern Germany, and opposite to Britain, were the Saxons, one of the fiercest and most warlike tribes of their nation. Hardy and intrepid in every kind of warfare, from their maritime situation, they were peculiarly addicted to nautical expeditions. Originally fishermen, they had become pirates; they possessed arms and ships, the art of navigation, and the habit of naval war. Invading and despoiling the neighbouring coasts, they had gradually extended their depredations from the German ocean to the British channel and the Bay of Biscay. The Romans had been frequently successful in repelling these piratical efforts,† but they could not prevent them from being renewed with increased force. The dissolution of the Roman power encouraged the Saxons to repeat their incursions into southern Europe; they were a terror to other nations.

* See Hume, vol. i. p. 7.

† Gibbon, vol. iv. p. 29.

[Character of the Saxons.]

Such was the people to whom the Britons applied for aid. Hengist and Horsa, the most celebrated warriors of the time, easily persuaded their countrymen to engage in an enterprise which appeared to them to promise a favourable opportunity of displaying valour, and acquiring plunder. Preparing a considerable force, they landed in the isle of Thanet, and immediately marched to defend the Britons from the Picts and Scots. They were speedily successful against the ravagers of southern Britain. Rescued from their enemies, the Britons now expected to enjoy tranquillity, under the protection of their warlike allies. They soon found, however, that a state cannot long enjoy independence and security, that trusts to any efforts but its own. The Saxons seeing, in the facility with which they overthrew the Picts and Scots, how easily a people could be conquered that were unable to resist such feeble invaders, soon formed the project of subjugating the Britons themselves. They were allured by the fertility, verdure, and riches of the country; and inflamed with the desire of exchanging for it, the barren, bleak, and indigent regions of uncultivated Germany. Of these advantages they informed their countrymen, and soon received re-enforcements, which enabled them easily to subdue that part of the country which they had first known and attempted. The ready establishment that the Saxons acquired in Kent under Hengist and Horsa, invited other hordes to invade different parts of the island. The Britons by degrees recovered that valour* which their ancestors had exerted against the conquerors of the world: the contest became arduous and bloody: many deeds of heroism were performed by the defenders of their liberties, as well as by ambitious aggressors. The fame of prince Arthur, though the theme of chivalrous mythology† and poetic fiction, is allowed by our historians to have its foundation in truth.‡ In the darkness of barbarity, as well as in the light of civilization, Britain wanted not leaders and soldiers to combat the assailants of her independence. The natives, however, were yearly decreasing in numbers, while the losses of the Saxons were supplied by recruits from the continent. After a hundred and fifty years, the Germans fully established themselves, by exterminating the ancient possessors. The Saxons, in forming their heptarchy, having extirpated the Britons, introduced into this island the manners and institutions of their native land, and effected a revolution more complete than that which conquest has usually produced.§ The elegance and refinement which had begun to spread through Britain while a Roman province, were now totally overwhelmed by barbarity.

But, uncouth as their manners were, the Saxons possessed vigorous understandings, undaunted courage, supported by great bodily strength, and inspired by an ardent love of liberty. Their several systems of policy, formed upon the principles of their ancestors, as consecrated to immortality by the pen of Tacitus, uniting kings, chiefs, and commons, were the rude but strong foundation of that constitu-

* Gibbon places the courage and perseverance with which the Britons resisted the Saxons, in a more striking light than any other historian. See *History*, vol. vi. p. 385 to 393.

† See *Don Quixote*.

‡ Hume, vol. i. p. 16; and Gibbon, vol. vi. p. 390; with their respective authorities.

§ Robertson's *Charles V.* vol. i. p. 197.

[Intercourse with the continent. Commerce.]

tion, which their descendants, inheriting the force of their character, now enjoy and preserve. When they had settled themselves beyond all question and dispute as masters of southern Britain, the Saxons soon discontinued intercourse with their German countrymen, and maintained little connexion with any foreign country. Adhering to the superstition of their forefathers, they had broken one powerful tie, by which many of the Britons were attached to christian Europe. Having, in the products of their new possession, supplies for their wants, they rarely attempted to cultivate the knowledge of other countries for the sake of commercial benefits. From their insular situation, together with the state of their continental neighbours, who were chiefly occupied in disputes with adjoining principalities, or internal arrangements, they had no hostile interference with foreign countries; neither religion, traffic, nor jarring pretensions, engaged them in amity, nor involved them in war, with the nations of the continent.

Since the invasion of Julius Cæsar, Britain was never so detached from external politics, as during the first ages of the Saxon heptarchy. Religion restored the intercourse which had formerly subsisted between Britain and the continent. The conversion of the Anglo-Saxons to christianity, beside the important effects which it was calculated to produce upon the morals and dispositions of its new votaries, proved the means of opening a political connexion between this island and less barbarous regions. Coincidence of theological opinion gradually introduced communications upon other subjects; the kingdoms of the heptarchy began to interest themselves in the affairs of their southern neighbours, and to conceive that a naval force was the most effectual means of defence and security to islanders. Though the internal contests between the several princes had prevented this newly discovered policy from being carried into extensive execution, yet one prince (Offa of Mercia) set the example; and, when France under Charlemagne had risen to a great pitch of power and opulence, encouraged commerce, and formed a navy, as the certain security of this country against the conquerors of the continent.* Offa perceived the advantage to be derived from foreign trade being carried on by his own subjects, and for that purpose concluded a commercial treaty with the French monarch.

When the heptarchy was consolidated under Egbert into the kingdom of England, circumstances became more auspicious to the commercial and political aggrandizement of the country. This revolution favoured internal trade, by putting a period to intestine wars, and rendering the communication between the several parts of England more secure and free: it was friendly to external commerce, by making the English monarchy a greater object to foreign merchants, and the English monarchs of greater consideration in foreign countries. Still the Anglo-Saxons were defective in that nautical power which their situation required, and its resources admitted.

Depredations committed by a new enemy, who invaded the coasts, convinced the English of the necessity of equipping a maritime force. The Saxons, who had remained in Germany when their brethren

* Henry's History of Great Britain, vol. iv. p. 196.

[Danes invade England. Navy, &c. established by Alfred.]

established themselves in Britain, continued to maintain the character, and follow the pursuits of their ancestors, being distinguished for naval power, and becoming, from its exertion in piracy, formidable to all the southern coasts. As they still adhered to the pagan superstition, Charlemagne undertook their conversion by means more agreeable to the violent bigotry of the benighted ages, than to the generosity, magnanimity and wisdom of his own character. In the progress of his conquests having subdued northern Germany, by the most rigorous edicts against paganism he endeavoured to establish Christianity, and severely punish the transgressors of his decrees, in many instances decimating the refractory.* Some of these pagans complied with the imperious mandates of the conqueror; while others, more intrepid and independent, refused to yield to injunctions so cruelly enforced, and, to avoid the fury of the persecution, retired into the adjoining peninsula of Jutland. Meeting there with inhabitants of similar manners, institutions, and religious faith, they easily coalesced with the ancient possessors, and having assumed a common appellation, the Saxons and Jutlanders, under the name of Danes, about the end of the eighth century, commenced a very extensive system of maritime invasion: in the course of which they were induced to visit England, at that time unprotected by an adequate naval force. In their inroads they showed that, though barbarians, they were not destitute of judgment or prudence. Learning that the natives were as valiant soldiers as themselves, they trusted chiefly to their skill and activity as sailors; and having previously explored the state of the coasts, they landed in the most defenceless and fertile parts; which having pillaged before an English force could assemble, they retired to their ships; and soon after descended, in a similar manner, and with similar success, on other parts of the coast. These enterprises harassed the vigorous reign of Egbert, who had not acquired the only force by which they could have been effectually repressed. Elated with their success, and farther encouraged by the feebleness and inaction of the superstitious Ethelwolf, they enlarged their schemes, and formed the project of subduing the whole of that country, with the devastation of whose coasts they had hitherto been contented. During the reign of this weak prince and his elder sons, the Danes made rapid strides to the attainment of their object; when the genius and wisdom of his youngest son Alfred, not only extricated his country from present danger, but established the most effectual means of future security and aggrandizement to the kingdom.

Having restored his country from a state of humiliation and subjection, to honour, independence, and glory, the illustrious Alfred turned his philosophic mind to a comprehensive survey of its situation and circumstances, and its relation to foreign powers. He saw that the safety and greatness of England must chiefly depend upon maritime effort. To promote trade, and to establish a navy, after the expulsion of the Danes, was a principal object of his renowned administration. For the attainment of these purposes, as well as to gratify the inquisitive spirit incident to genius, he cultivated an intercourse with foreign and even remote countries. His agents not only explored the shores

[Contests with the Danes beneficial to England.]

of the Baltic and the White Sea, but investigated the state of Asia, from the Mediterranean to the Persian and Arabian gulf. He introduced new manufactures, which furnished many articles for exportation, as well as for consumption within the kingdom. By his inventive talents, he made great improvements in the art of ship-building. The vessels constructed under his directions were much superior to any that were known in the northern or western seas, in the three important qualities of celerity, force, and facility of management.* As the founder of English jurisprudence, and the establisher of internal security and tranquillity, Alfred is not more deservedly celebrated than as the founder of English navigation and commerce, and the establisher of external security and greatness. This extraordinary prince so clearly demonstrated and vigorously pursued the real interests of his country, that other Anglo-Saxon kings, according to their adoption or neglect of the policy of Alfred, succeeded in resisting the efforts of foreign aggressors. The abilities and vigour of the English sovereigns for several generations maintained a powerful navy, which prevented the northern plunderers from seriously infesting a country so strongly secured, and impelled them to seek pillage and settlement among our continental neighbours.

The weakness of Ethelred in the neglect and mismanagement of naval affairs, manifested in its effects the wisdom of Alfred, as clearly as it was shown in the able measures of his immediate successors; for when the system of defence, which Alfred by his precept and example inculcated, was either abandoned or feebly executed, the evils recurred, which he had so vigorously repelled and afterwards prevented. But, though the invasions of the Danes impressed the English with a high idea of the importance of commerce, it was rather with the view of affording the means of defence, than of being productive of prosperity and civilization. Export traffic, so much interrupted by northern cruisers, did not, in the time of the Saxons, rise to that magnitude which Alfred had proposed and expected. The total subjection of England to the Danes was salutary to the commerce of the kingdom, by putting an end to those bloody wars between the two nations, which had raged about forty years with little intermission. Canute the Great, a wise as well as a warlike prince, endeavoured to gain the affections of his English subjects, by affording them the most effectual protection, and every encouragement in his power. He employed the influence which his high reputation, extensive dominions, and mighty force had obtained, among foreign princes, to procure favours and privileges from them to his trading subjects. From his time, during the reign of his sons, and after the restoration of the Saxon line, the navigation and commerce of England continued comparatively flourishing till the conquest. The Danes, having betaken themselves to cultivate the arts of peace, no longer disturbed their neighbours by piracy. By the contest with the northern navigators, the Anglo-Saxons were losers in the interruption of agriculture and of internal improvement, but gainers in acquiring naval power, commercial ideas, and promoting an intercourse with the continent. From the accession of Canute, when the internal disadvantages ceased to be

* Henry, vol. iv. p. 321.

[Change effected by the Normans. War between England and France.]

felt, and the external advantages increased, the benefit which they now derived exceeded the loss that they had formerly incurred. Though England, from religion, had hitherto some intercourse with southern Europe, her chief political connexion was with the north. She had very little acquaintance with her adjacent neighbours the French. The conquest of the kingdom by William of Normandy, made a most important change, both in her internal state, and in her relation to the continent.

Complicated as the feudal system was in its nature, and extensive in its subjects, it was extremely simple in its principle, and confined in its original objects : it was a policy which, overlooking every other consideration, narrowed its provision to national defence ;* and was merely a reciprocal guarantee of acquisitions proceeding from conquest. The leaders and officers among the northern subduers of middle and southern Europe, in their respective tribes and divisions, entered into agreements to prevent themselves from being dispossessed of their lands by other invaders. The insulated state of the Anglo Saxons rendering them less exposed to ambitious depredators than their continental neighbours, the feudal system had not been established in England. The people had retained more of the ancient German liberty than on the continent, where an enslaving aristocracy was generally prevalent. Hence was preserved that spirit of freedom, which the most aspiring monarchs could never thoroughly subdue, and which has rendered this comparatively small territory, this "little body with a mighty heart !" the admiration and terror of most extensive and powerful empires. The manners of the Saxons, though rude and unpolished, were frank, manly, and independent; totally void of that servility and submissiveness which characterize the subjects of either monarchical or aristocratical slavery ; they were barbarians, it is true, but bold and generous. The conquest of the kingdom by the Normans effected a considerable change ; though by no means like that by the Saxons, a complete revolution in laws and manners. William attempted to model his new dominions according to the feudal system, with partial, but imperfect success. The Saxon spirit of liberty continuing, extended to the Normans, with whom, in a few ages, the former inhabitants became entirely intermixed ; and obtained from the prudence of wise,† or extorted from the fears of weak,‡ princes, the revival, and even the improvement, of the Anglo-Saxon constitution. Still, however, the Norman laws and establishments subsisted in a considerable degree, and long continued to affect the condition and manners of the people.§

The changes produced by the Norman conquest were still greater at the beginning, and eventually more permanent in other respects, than in our laws and establishments. Hence is to be dated the commencement of our intercourse with middle and southern Europe, and especially with France, which has formed so important a branch of our political history. From that growing intercourse with continen-

* Robertson's Charles V. vol. i. p. 13.

† Henry I. and Henry II.

‡ John and Henry III. See Hume, vol. i. and Blackstone, vol. iv. c. 33.

§ Blackstone, vol. iv. c. 33. on the Rise, Progress, and Completion of the British Constitution.

[Civil and political objects of Edward I. and III.]

tal Europe, proceeded also, in the progress of time, the beginning of our commercial efforts, and the revival and extension of our naval force. From the possession of Normandy by the English princes, proceeded those wars which so long raged between France and England to their mutual detriment. The crusades at certain times, by giving them identity of object, produced alliance; but this was soon after followed by hostilities. The weakness and wickedness of John, abroad as well as at home, produced most beneficial effects to his country. The murder of prince Arthur excited a war, which, terminating in the conquest of the English dominions in France, extirpated the principal cause of dissension; while the weakness of Henry III. and the wisdom and goodness of Louis IX. maintained a long peace between the respective kingdoms.

The lofty genius, comprehensive wisdom, and intrepid spirit of the first Edward, were chiefly occupied with two grand objects; the establishment of a perfect system of jurisprudence in England, and the consolidation of Great Britain into one kingdom. Engaged so deeply within the island, he was involved in no lasting or important hostilities with the continent. In the unfortunate reign of Edward II. the feebleness of the son in Britain undid a great part of what the abilities of the father had effected; and with the continent he had established no material connexion. The ambition mingled with the extraordinary qualities of his celebrated son found a new ground of contest with France, which caused great disasters to both kingdoms. Unwise as the policy was which prompted Edward III. to seek the sovereignty of a kingdom in opposition to its established laws, and contrary to the interests of his own country, his measures for executing the undertaking were concerted with an ability worthy of his character. To make a powerful impression, he formed an extensive confederacy with continental states, and laid the foundation of a much wider intercourse with the Low Countries and Germany, than had ever existed before. The first important consequence resulting from Edward's alliance with the Netherlands was, that his attention was thereby directed to naval affairs. After the revival of commerce, first by the Italian states in the south, and afterwards by the Hanseatic league in the north of Europe, central position, maritime situation, fertility of soil, and industry of people, being fostered under a government of less feudal aristocracy, and more enlarged freedom than prevailed in France and Germany, rendered Flanders the medium of commercial communication between the coasts of the Mediterranean and the Baltic. It nearly monopolized that intermediate traffic, for its neighbours of France and Britain made no attempt to improve their respective opportunities for trade. English materials indeed were the principal subjects of Flemish skill; from the raw produce of the farms and pastures of England, Flanders derived the staple of her flax and woollen manufactures. An emporium of merchandize, she acquired wealth and force; and was particularly distinguished for naval power. Resorting to Flanders to promote the purposes of the military alliance, Edward was not slow in observing the political state of that country. His perspicacious mind discovered the cause to be, its commerce and manufactures. He endeavoured to excite among his own subjects, that spirit of industry, which he found so beneficial to its votaries;

[Influence of England in the affairs of Europe. Failure of Edward's policy.]

and to direct it to those objects in which he perceived its efforts to be most productive. He invited Flemish artisans to settle in his dominions, and commenced the woollen manufactures in his own kingdom. Knowing his people to have genius, enterprise, and perseverance, he first turned those qualities towards the arts which have raised England to be the foremost among commercial nations. As Edward I. formed and digested English jurisprudence, so admirably fitted for rendering to every man his right, and guarding his property; Edward III. laid the foundation of that skill, and those efforts, which have acquired to Englishmen so much property to secure. From his engagements with Flanders originated naval victory,* which united with his commercial views to impress on his mind the importance of maritime power. The splendid achievements at Cressy and Poitiers, so glorious to English valour, and to the courage and conduct of Edward and his renowned son, combining with the admired talents and character of both, gave to them and their country a weight in other European kingdoms, which England had never before possessed. The irritation of the contest produced a spirit of hostility between the two first nations of the modern world. Frequent wars impeded the advances of both to an opulence and power suited to their respective genius and character. The reign of Edward III. may be considered, in English history, as the great epoch of commencing manufactures and commerce in this nation; as the period when England began to have an extensive influence in the affairs of the continent; and when a spirit of regular and permanent hostility first broke out between England and France.

Though the basis of British commerce and naval power was so ably and skilfully laid by Edward, yet general causes and particular events long retarded the superstructure. The martial spirit prevalent in England, when intermingled with the pride of feudal aristocracy, represented the manufacturer and merchant as despicable, in comparison to the soldier; and while the warlike character of the times depreciated in the public opinion the estimation in which those peaceful professions were held, and precluded from them the votaries of honour and fame, the violence and turbulence of those rude ages diminishing the security of property, often tended to obstruct the votaries of interest in their mercantile adventures. The character and circumstances of the succeeding sovereigns, and the contests about the throne, promoting for a century military energy, and not restraining turbulent violence and injustice, interrupted the natural progress of Edward's plans.

The feebleness of a long minority, the frivolity and profligacy of Richard's personal character, the jarring interests of the princes of the blood, and their respective pretensions to that power which the incapacity of the sovereign was so little qualified to hold, prevented any advances from being made in great schemes of policy. When Richard's sceptre was wrested from his weak hands by the skill and force of a powerful usurper, there still continued in the kingdom grounds of feud and discord very unfavourable to national improvement. Henry IV. provident, vigilant, and wise, comprehended the great importance of commerce, and promoted it to the utmost of his

* Off Sluise, June, 1340.

[Attempted conquest of France. Wars of Lancaster and York. Edward IV.]

power. He formed a commercial treaty with the Hans-town merchants; and promoted the settlement of mercantile foreigners within his own kingdom. He devised and encouraged the formation of English factories in foreign parts; a proposition, which, as our knowledge of the globe enlarged, and our intercourse with remote countries extended, has in subsequent times been expanded into a grand and valuable system of colonization. He, like his grandfather, saw how necessary superiority at sea was to the security and prosperity of England, and made it one of his chief objects to maintain a formidable navy.* He encouraged artizans and mariners, and inculcated industry; but the various insurrections by which his reign was disturbed, though all successfully quelled by his courage and conduct, interrupted the execution of his commercial schemes.

The extraordinary genius of Henry V., equally fitted for the field and the cabinet, directed its exertions chiefly to military superiority; but he was impressed with the importance of naval strength to England: he was as victorious at sea as at land; and in his reign the fleets of England rode triumphant in the channel. Eagerly intent, however, on conquering France, he could not bestow an adequate regard on the commercial advancement of his kingdom. After this great prince was prematurely cut off, the first years of his son's reign were employed in attempts to preserve and extend his father's conquests in France; but the succeeding part of his reign, replete with discomfiture abroad and discontent at home, lost the national superiority both by sea and land. The renowned earl of Warwick, indeed, recovered to England her maritime dominion; but the discords in which he soon took so active a part, and which terminated in such bloody and destructive civil wars, impeded industry, commerce, and all the peaceful arts, and involved England in grievous calamities. The duke of York, lineal heir to the crown, induced by the imbecility of the reigning prince, with probable grounds for expecting success, attempted to finish the usurpation which the talents and character of the two preceding monarchs appeared to have firmly established; and though he himself did not live to attain the wished for dignity, yet, seconded and supported by the illustrious Warwick, he paved the way for the speedy accession of his son.

Edward IV. to dissipation and profligacy joining great vigour of character whenever occasion required its efforts, exerting the maritime superiority of England with considerable success, invaded France with a powerful fleet. But the civil wars that recurred during the greater part of his reign, together with the indolence that marked his conduct when not stimulated by imperious and immediate necessity, prevented the promotion of commercial schemes in proportion to the resources of the country; of which the state at that time, exhausted by long wars and general devastation, was extremely unfavourable to the success of arts and of commerce. The short and cruel reign of Richard III., principally occupied in endeavouring to remove the consequences of one crime by the commission of others, was too much engaged in massacre and proscription to afford him leisure and attention for supporting the internal prosperity or maritime force

* Henry's History, vol. x. p. 243.

[Civil wars reduce the feudal nobles. Effects of reviving learning.]

of his country. The recent discomfiture of the English in France, added to their own internal dissensions, occasioned great distress, depopulated the kingdom, retarded agriculture and manufactures, and increased the ferocity of manners; while the profligate character of the princes of the house of York, and the wickedness which they excited or directed, introduced flagrant depravity. Edward having obtained possession of the throne by military force, however well founded his right, very frequently violated the constitution of his country, and tyrannized over the lives, liberty, and property of his subjects. His courtiers and favourites imitating his example, carried cruelty and oppression against their adversaries to a still greater pitch than even Edward himself. The ancient nobility of England were almost entirely annihilated by the dreadful contests. Her own fatal dissensions, added to her recent discomfiture in France, had lessened the influence of England on the continent. During the greatest part of the fifteenth century, her progress in point of internal civilization and prosperity as well as of foreign influence, was little proportioned to her intrinsic powers. Still, however, if her advances were obstructed, they were not altogether impeded. Learning raised her head, though mingled with the superstition of the cloisters, in which she had been cherished and preserved from total extinction. Various colleges were founded and institutions promoted, which proved ultimately favourable to the advancement of knowledge. The cultivated taste of polished ages, or the enlarged moral and political science of enlightened philosophers, were not to be expected in a state of society clouded with darkness, and fettered with superstition; yet some of the seeds were now sown, which afterwards ripened into literature.

The efforts of reviving learning, though not very judiciously directed, were by no means feeble. The metaphysical theology of the schools, originating in misapprehension concerning the most profound of philosophers,* was not devoid of Grecian acuteness; and if its discoveries did not greatly expand the understanding, or its spirit liberalize the sentiments, yet its contentions, by sharpening and invigorating the faculties, paved the way for intellectual and moral improvement. Increased sagacity began to produce discussion of authority in matters of thought and reasoning: the bold doctrines of Wickliffe, though chiefly opposed by menace and persecution, still excited a few of the clergy to employ more rational arguments. Cotemporary or collateral heresies moved some ecclesiastics to prepare, by literary effort, for the defence of the existing superstition; while they disposed and formed others for attack. But erudition, narrowly as it was still diffused, was not entirely confined to the church. Humphrey of Gloucester was a prince of considerable learning;† Anthony earl of Rivers, and John earl of Worcester, in the reigns of Henry IV. and Edward, were eminent for literary knowledge.‡ Gallant and meritorious as were many of the nobles, who perished in the wars between Lancaster and York, their fall tended ultimately to the reduction of

* See in Dr. Gillies's Preface to his translation of Aristotle, his account of the difference between Aristotle's text and the comments of his professed interpreters.

† See Hume's History of England.

‡ Henry's History, vol. x. p. 147.

[Different institutions in England and France. Henry VII.]

the feudal aristocracy, which, though never so entirely predominant in England as to stifle all remains of Saxon liberty, was yet so prevalent as greatly to encroach on the constitutional rights of a free people. Generally bloody as were the wars, the animosity of contending chieftains, and the resentment, rapacity, or jealous fears of the successive conquerors, rendered the proportion of grandes either killed in battle, or massacred by cruelty, much greater than that of the gentry, yeomanry, traders, and subordinate orders. The rising consequence of the great body of English commons eventually saved their country from the absolute monarchy which overwhelmed the neighbouring nations.

Similar, indeed, in calamitous circumstances, at different though near periods of the fifteenth century, but dissimilar in the original institutions, and in the ranks and orders of men which these generated, France and England were destined to experience very unlike systems of polity, at the time they both advanced in civilization and knowledge. When the French nobility, after being so much exhausted by internal dissensions and the wars with England, were farther impaired by the crafty, unfeeling, and oppressive policy of Louis XI.; there being no intermediate orders between them and the labouring people, who were actually slaves, all ranks were involved in one vortex of arbitrary dominion. France became a simple monarchy; while England, by rearing and cherishing a middle class, which augmented in force as spreading industry and increasing knowledge, enlarged the means of acquiring moderate independence, was improved into a free constitution, providing equally for the governing and governed, and proposing the general welfare as the only legitimate object of political establishments and national conduct.

To the promotion of these beneficial purposes, no sovereign was more instrumental than Henry VII.: though his measures originated in the peculiar circumstances of his situation, rather than in liberal policy; yet, without allowing either wisdom or goodness the full credit of the beneficial effects produced, an impartial examiner of his actions, and their evident consequences, must see, that he promoted the prosperity and meliorated the condition of England. He, indeed, was the first who carried effectually into execution, the great plans of improvement devised by the genius of his illustrious predecessor Edward III. Contracted in sentiment, covetous in disposition, and suspicious in temper, Henry did not always propose the most benevolent ends. Vigorous and penetrating in intellect, cautious in deliberation, but decisive in conduct, he both devised and employed the most opposite means. Apprehending the adherents of the house of York to be inimical to his own doubtful title, if he did not create, he probably brought into action, discontents which might have lain dormant; but when dissatisfaction rose to revolt, he with firmness and prudence suppressed repeated rebellions. Experiencing or suspecting the principal enmity to subsist among the higher ranks, he was anxious to weaken the order of nobles: he permitted the barons to break the entails of their estates, and made laws to prevent them from retaining large bodies of clients, which rendered them formidable and turbulent.* He encouraged agriculture and commerce, perhaps

* Robertson's Charles V. vol. i. p. 102.

[He encourages navigation. Sebastian Cabot.]

with a view (as our great historian conjectures) of gratifying his avarice by filling his coffers from imposts;† and he concluded several very useful commercial treaties, which, though somewhat narrow in their principles, were in their operation lucrative. He bestowed great attention on the promotion of navigation; as, before his time, foreign trade had been chiefly carried on in foreign bottoms, he endeavoured, with considerable success, to procure to English ships the carriage of our own exports and imports.

During this reign a spirit of maritime adventure for the purposes of discovery and commerce arose in several parts of Europe. The invention of the compass encouraged navigators to explore oceans before untried by Europeans. Venice and Genoa had hitherto monopolized the traffic of the western world to India. Portugal, in the fifteenth century, was governed by a succession of courageous, able, and enterprising princes; who, perceiving the advantages accruing to the Italian republics from a trade with India, attempted to employ their maritime situation in profitable traffic. Nautical adventurers, directed by the princes of that country, proceeded gradually along the coast of Africa. At length, they extended their voyage to the southern promontory of that immense peninsula: to which, foreseeing it would open a passage to the East Indies, they gave the name of the Cape of Good Hope; and a few years after arriving on the Malabar coast, showed to western Europe, that India was more easily accessible to its commercial adventurers, than to its eastern neighbours; and that oriental riches were no longer to be exclusively acquired by the coasting traders of the Mediterranean, but to be shared by the bold essayers of unknown oceans. But while Vasquez di Gama found out an accessible though circuitous course, from the shores of the northern Atlantic to the southern regions of Hindostan, Columbus, by the force of his genius, conceived, and by the boldness of his enterprise and perseverance, discovered to the inhabitants of Europe, much nearer to their own coasts, a new world, replete with incentives to commerce and navigation; and abounding not only with materials for riches, but with subjects of reflection, and means for enlarging human comprehension and enjoyment. Soon after the illustrious Florentine found the West Indies, Americus Vesputius, in prosecution of Columbus's plan, arrived at the southern continent, and gave his own name to a quarter of the globe discovered by another. Accident, and not the parsimony of Henry, prevented England from enjoying the honour of this signal discovery. He soon fitted out a squadron, which sailed to the west, in order to explore unknown regions in latitudes more contiguous to his own kingdom, and seek a nearer passage to India than by doubling Africa. Sebastian Cabot conducted the enterprise, and arrived at a coast to which he gave the name of Newfoundland. Steering along to the southward as far as that part of the coast which has since been named Virginia, he ascertained that there were large tracts of land adjacent, convenient for naval enterprise upon the Atlantic. Though Henry did not attempt to establish a settlement on this coast, yet the enterprise was of the highest importance, as it stimulated England to farther nautical adventure. A spirit of navigation, commerce, and discovery was excited by Henry, which after-

† Hume.

[Increasing influence of England among foreign states. State of Europe.]

wards generally diffused itself, and called into action the maritime exertions of these islands, improved by all the sagacity and energy of the national character when employed in the most beneficial direction.

But while Henry thus promoted the commerce, navigation, and internal prosperity of his country, he extended her influence among foreign states. He loved peace, without fearing war. Though by no means comprehensive in his views of European policy, he understood sufficiently the relations, objects, and condition of other kingdoms, to provide for the security and defence of his own dominions. He was courted by cotemporary princes in every part of Europe, and the English nation was never so closely interwoven in continental affairs as during his reign. Other circumstances concurred with the personal character of Henry, to extend the intercourse between England and the nations of the continent. Previous to the fifteenth century, little political connexion had subsisted between the neighbouring states of Europe; their reciprocal hostilities were rather the effect of passion and personal animosity, than of any well digested system of policy. Their means of reciprocal annoyance, occasional impost, and temporary militia, though sufficiently adapted to the desultory conflicts of the pride or resentment of rival chieftains, were little fitted for the purposes of systematic war. When England, under Henry V. and in the posthumous execution of his great and ambitious projects, had almost overwhelmed France, the neighbouring principalities of Germany and Spain bestowed no attention on an event menacing the security and independence of Europe.* The contests between the several kingdoms of Spain, evidently tending to unite that part of the continent into one great empire, were regarded by the rest of Europe with equal indifference. Princes were little affected by remote or eventual danger. This inattention did not entirely arise from the want of sagacity to foresee distant contingencies, but proceeded in a considerable degree from the condition of their dominions, which called their consideration to present and proximate objects. The power of the barons under the feudal system, often either distracting the public tranquillity by the feuds of rivalry, menacing the sovereign by rebellion, or by oppression driving the populace to insurrection, with the imperfections of the civil government, so fully occupied the sovereigns, as to leave them little leisure to survey foreign affairs. This was especially the situation of France, the most compact, central, and populous kingdom of Europe; and the best fitted, from the advantages of her situation, the number and character of her people, if internally well governed, either to secure herself, or to protect or disturb her neighbours. The feuds into which that kingdom was divided, weakened the force of the monarchy; but from the destruction of the nobility in the wars with England, the rapacious policy of Louis XI. and the re-annexation of the English possessions and detached principalities to the crown, government was rendered almost simply monarchical. This event was accelerated at home, and its influence extended abroad, by another effect of the wars. These generated standing armies, which, now being first employed by Charles VII. to

* See Robertson's Charles V. vol. i. p. 89. The same truth may be gathered from Hume's History of those wars, though it is not so expressly stated.

[Augmented power of princes. Balance of power.]

preserve his crown, and afterwards maintained by him to humble the remainder of his barons, were now enlarged by his son, and exercised in crushing the ancient nobility, and seizing the territories of his neighbours.

Charles VIII. the son and successor of Louis XI. found the nobility incapable of opposing the will or projects of the prince, and a powerful army, with little to employ its force but the resumption of Brittany. He effected this purpose partly by war, and finally by marriage. The monarch of France, now no longer occupied at home by the English or his barons, from efforts commencing in successful defence and progressively extending to internal usurpation, began to prepare measures of offence against independent states, which had given him no provocation. For the execution of such designs, he possessed subjects whose energy of character rendered them formidable and efficient instruments against all with whom they were at war, either justly or unjustly. Having invaded Italy with a powerful force, he first presented France as the disturber of Europe; a character which she has so often resumed in the three following centuries, with strength of operation, and vicissitudes of event; not rarely with injustice of principles, impolicy of object, and pernicious result. Charles overran Italy from the Alps to the southern extremity and possessed himself of the city and kingdom of Naples. Neighbouring nations were now acquiring similar efficiency of force with France by similar means; by the reduction of the nobles, the consolidation of principalities, the re-union of fiefs under the lords paramount, and the employment of a standing army. Exempted from constant anxiety and apprehensions from their own subjects, they were enabled to watch the conduct of their neighbours; and in observing their motions, to view distant probabilities as well as immediate effects. The most powerful prince of the continent after Charles of France, was Ferdinand of Arragon, who was now by his marriage with Isabella of Castile, actual sovereign of Spain. This prudent prince, alarmed at a progress which endangered the safety of his dominions, combined with the Italian states and Maximilian of Austria in forming a confederacy to repel the prosperous aggression of France, and confine the invader to his ancient dominions. The object and principle of this alliance form an epoch in political history, as the first effort of modern* times to maintain a balance of power; which is merely self preservation in a community dictating plans of policy, to provide against circuitous injury and annoyance, as well as against direct attacks. To this treaty, which was concluded at Cambray, Henry VII.

* From history it appears, that the sagacious Greeks very early discerned the necessity of resisting efforts against others, which might extend to themselves. Animosity, ambition, and pride, were not the sole causes of the Peloponnesian confederacy against Athens; but, in a considerable degree, the apprehension of growing power. When the Spartans became in their turn predominant, a similar confederacy was formed, to reduce the excess of their power; an object to which the Athenians adhered with such nicety of discrimination, that when they found the scale preponderate in favour of the Thebans, sacrificing all animosity to sound policy, they joined the Spartans in order to preserve the balance of power. See Gillies, vol. ii. chap. 5. vol. iii. chap. 27 and 30; but mostly in the last. Other histories also illustrate this observation respecting the Greeks, whose policy was so contrary to that of other ancient nations, especially the victims of progressive Roman conquest.

[Character of the reign of Henry VII. Henry VIII.]

acceded, and, though his general caution, and distance from the scene of hostilities, did not suffer him to take an active share in the war, yet his junction in the alliance is an epoch in the history of England; because England then first joined in a continental confederacy to repress the offensive measures of France.

Though the reign of Henry VII. conducted eventually to political as well as commercial and naval improvement, yet the extension of freedom, far from being Henry's object, was by no means the immediate effect of his measures. The aristocracy was reduced, but the people were not yet risen to such strength and importance as to oppose a sufficient bulwark to the augmented powers of the crown. Twenty-eight temporal lords only formed the first house of peers after Henry's accession; and the order was soon found to have decreased in authority, as well as in number and possessions. In the interval between the fall of the barons, and the rise of the commons, the power of the crown was much greater than in former reigns. Henry VII. may justly be termed an absolute prince. His government was arbitrary, both in the series of his acts and the general regulations or laws, which through him were established.* In his time the authority of the star-chamber was revived and in some cases confirmed by law, and armed with powers the most dangerous and unconstitutional over the persons and properties of the subjects. Informations were allowed to be received, instead of indictments, in order to multiply fines and pecuniary penalties. A tendency, directly or indirectly to augment the emoluments of the exchequer was the general character of his laws. Ambition in Henry, descending from its lofty rank, became the humble minister of avarice; but the joint effects of both passions, though hurtful at the time, were destined by providence to be beneficial to posterity.

Henry VIII. was disposed to promote the commercial improvements which his father had begun; but the knowledge which either he himself or his ministers possessed of the subject, was extremely imperfect. On the whole, all the direct acts and immediate consequences of his government were inauspicious to nautical discovery, and the extension of commerce. Navigation and trade were indeed advanced during this period, but rather by the efforts of private adventurers, than the policy of either the sovereign or the legislature. The first part of Henry's reign was chiefly occupied at home in pleasurable dissipation, and courtly splendour, under the magnificent and ostentatious ministry of Wolsey; wasting in sumptuous entertainments and costly pomp, the riches which the avarice of his father had acquired. The luxuries of the court requiring foreign supplies, stimulated private adventure, and, without any meritorious plans of the sovereign or his counsellors, encouraged the importation of commodities from distant and even newly discovered countries. The spirit of maritime enterprise excited by the last king, though little promoted by his son, operated on the nation, and the circle of trade was gradually enlarged in various quarters of the world.

Though no English colonies were yet settled in any part of the new world, their merchants carried on a trade with the islands in the West

* Blackstone's Commentaries, vol. iv. chap. 31 on the progress of the English laws and constitution.

[Progress of trade and discovery. Attempts to find a north-west passage.]

Indies, which had been seized and settled by the Spaniards; they had agents residing in some of these settlements, particularly in the great island of Cuba, for the management of their trade. Mr. Thorn of Bristol, one of the greatest merchants and boldest adventurers of the age, established a factory at Cuba; and was the first Englishman who set the example of a commercial settlement in the new world. Employing the opportunities he thereby acquired, not only for the purposes of present traffic, but for discovery and future extension of commerce, he sent agents to the Spanish fleet, furnished with great sums of money, to bring exact charts of the seas, rivers, and lands which they visited, and as accurate a description of the accessibility, state, and productions of the several countries, as they could procure.* The spirit of discovery in private adventurers was no less ardent, than the desire of trading with countries already known. Henry in the beginning of his reign appeared eager to promote inquiry into new regions, and fitted out ships for exploring the southern ocean. But the expedition by some misconduct or mischance having failed,† the king, from a fickleness incident to violent minds, and the prominent feature in his character, totally abandoned all thoughts of such undertakings. Merchants and mariners, however, persevered; and though some of their voyages appear not to have been lucrative, yet, by adding to the national stock of nautical science, and extending the sphere of English navigation, they produced important advantages.

Two ships destined for South America were committed to Cabot, which visited the Brazils. The knowledge of that coast, and its great projection into the Atlantic, being acquired, Hawkins, father to the renowned voyager, directed his course to the same country, and having opened a traffic with the Brazilians, crossing over to the opposite promontory, was the first Englishman who surveyed the coast of Guinea. With their progress in gain, the desires of English mariners increased; and their ideas expanding with the advancement of knowledge, they directed their thoughts to Indian opulence. In their voyages to the Mediterranean, having traded to its eastern coasts, they received accurate information concerning the riches of Hindostan, which before were only imperfectly known through distant and uncertain report. In their intercourse with Portugal, they beheld with envy the vast wealth that flowed into that country from the regions of the east.‡ Conceiving, with Columbus, that the islands which he first discovered lay contiguous to the vast continent comprehended under the general name of India, they hoped to find a more compendious passage through which, by easily outstripping the Portuguese and all southern Europe, they might acquire the principal share of the treasures of India. Unsuccessful as the attempt proved to discover a north-west passage, and unfortunate as the adventurers were, yet the undertaking showed a bold spirit of commercial enterprise. Notwithstanding partial discouragements and failures, the general result of private maritime pursuits in Henry's reign, was a great accession of trade and riches to the country. Under this monarch, from the progression of causes that began to operate through Europe in his

* Hackluyt, vol. ii. p. 726.

† Henry, vol. xii. p. 327.

‡ Robertson's posthumous America.

[Continental policy of Henry.]

father's reign, the interest of European powers became more involved and intermixed, than they had been at any former period.

Henry attained with the continental powers a very great degree of influence; he indeed held the balance, but turned the scale according to present impulse and passion; being more frequently actuated by the suggestions of his proud, ambitious, and resentful favourite, than either by equity or sound policy. When he ascended the throne, the power of France, superior to any other nation on the continent, the hostile jealousy between that country and England, and the connexion and affinity between Henry and Ferdinand, concurred in rendering the English king inimical to the French.

Louis XII. was eager, like his predecessor, to conquer Naples; but the opposition of Ferdinand, joined to the treachery of that crafty and unprincipled monarch, prevented his success. A new field, however, was soon opened for the ambition of Louis. Julius II. like many of his predecessors on the papal throne, instead of promoting the meek benevolence of the christian religion, was the incendiary of unprovoked and iniquitous war. By his intrigues, a partition treaty was framed between the three great powers of Austria, Spain, and France, for dismembering the dominions and dividing the riches of the illustrious republic of Venice. A league was formed at Cambray for this nefarious purpose; and it was stipulated, that the pope, who instigated the robbery and projected the plan, should have a considerable share of the plunder acquired by more powerful and efficient perpetrators.* Such confederacies, composed of jarring materials, contain the seeds of their own dissolution. The rapid successes of French energy filled the allies with jealousy and alarm. The pope, who had first planned this alliance of the great powers, anxiously sought to excite discord among the several members, involving them in mutual quarrels, that he might expel them successively from Italy, and enjoy without control the sole direction of that country.† He detached Ferdinand from the league, and endeavoured, through that prince and his own influence, to excite Henry to war with France. The sagacious prelate, thoroughly knowing the characters with which he had to deal, made suitable applications; he first addressed himself to Ferdinand's interest; then to Henry's love of distinction, national animosity to the French, and passionate zeal for the catholic religion; in which, as in every thing else, his ardour was violent, and spurned at all contradiction. He persuaded Henry that in attacking France, he should fight the cause of the church, which Louis was most profanely defying; he flattered and promoted his ambassador; and led Henry to expect, that the title of *the Most Christian King*, so precious an ornament to the French monarchy, should be transferred to the English sovereign. To fix the impression of his religious authority on this devout monarch, he sent him a sacred rose, perfumed with musk, and anointed with chrism.‡ Inspired by devotion, impatient for displaying to Europe his power and importance, and reviving the

* See the outlines of this confederacy and its operations, in Robertson's Charles V., vol. i. p. 117 to 120; and Hume, vol. i. p. 263 to 267. For the detail, see Guicciardini; and l'Abbé du Bos, Histoire de la Ligue de Cambray.

† Guicciardini, lib. viii.

‡ See Hume, vol. ii. p. 265.

[Balance of power. Interests of England require Henry to support Francis.]

ancient claims upon France, Henry engaged in a war, which was neither necessary to the security, nor conducive to the interests, of his kingdom. Chivalrous impolicy engaged the romantic James in the contest, and kindled a war between Scotland and England. The disciplined valour of the southern Britons overcame the impetuous rashness of northern heroism, and obtained a victory, fatal to the vanquished, and brilliant but useless to the conquerors. English courage and military prowess were again displayed in France with splendid achievements, and signal success, but followed by no important advantage; and all parties perceiving the unavoidable necessity of putting an end to the calamities of war, a treaty of peace was concluded, which comprehended all the belligerent powers.

After peace and tranquillity had continued for several years, a new state of European affairs gave a change to the scale of power, and to the policy that was expedient for maintaining the balance. Charles of Austria had now succeeded to all the inheritances and acquisitions of his paternal grandfather and grandmother, in Germany, Italy, and the Low Countries; and to all the inheritances and acquisitions of his maternal grandfather and grandmother in Spain, Italy, Africa, and the new world.* Francis, the first of that name, had ascended the throne of France on the death of his cousin Louis. The relative position and state of their territories led these two princes to political rivalry, while other causes concurred in inflaming their competition. They were both young, and succeeded to their respective possessions about the same time; both were endued with great abilities, though of dissimilar dispositions; and both became masters of very extensive resources. Beside so many general grounds of emulous animosity, they had a special source in their respective application for the imperial diadem. The appointment of Charles, and rejection of Francis, called immediately into action those causes of hostility which must have soon operated from their reciprocal situation and respective characters. Between these two mighty monarchs, Henry of England only, by the greatness of his power, was fitted to hold the balance. Quick in perception, and vigorous in capacity, he readily saw the general policy of preserving an equipoise; and, devoted to the honour of his country, as well as to his own glory, he valued himself on being the umpire of Europe. But though his talents were considerable, his judgment was not proportionably sound; at least, its exertions were too easily swayed by the impulse of temper and passion.

The accumulated possessions of the emperor Charles V. rendered him manifestly superior to Francis; political security therefore, the principle of English interference in continental affairs,† required that Henry should lean towards France; but he cherished the ancient English enmity to an opposite neighbour. Francis, who resembled Henry in many of the accomplishments on which he greatly prided himself, and in some parts of his character, (though much superior

* Robertson's Charles V., vol. ii. p. 1 to 26.

† See lord Grenville's speech on the Russian armament in 1791; Mr. Pitt's speech on the negotiation with Buonaparte; Mr. Fox's speeches on the continental connexions which England ought to pursue; Mr. Pitt's applying the same principle to our alliance with Holland and Prussia; and parliamentary speeches on the object and grounds of the late war.

[Unwise, but vigorous policy of Henry. The Reformation.]

on the whole,) was the object of his personal rivalry. Henry was moreover governed by his favourite Wolsey, whom Charles courted, and bribed most lavishly for the present, flattering him with the hopes of being raised to the papal dignity, at that time the highest in christendom. Instigated by this imperious counsellor, the English king adopted a policy totally inconsistent with the interests of his kingdom; made war with France, and, by weakening that country, rendered it more easy for Charles to increase his already overgrown power. When Francis, defeated and a prisoner, was reduced to the lowest pitch of distress, Henry's motive of interference was much less the necessity of repressing Charles, than the persuasions of Wolsey; who, disappointed of the expected promotion, (most fortunately for the independence of Europe,) became as violent against the emperor as he had been before in his favour. Henry's conduct towards Catharine widened the breach between him and her nephew; so that, during the rest of his reign, he was, with very few intermissions, closely connected with Francis, and Charles was prevented from endangering the liberties of Europe.

The part which Henry took in the affairs of the continent, though far from being uniformly wise, or even, when right, proceeding from reasons of sound policy, was generally efficacious. It demonstrated the force and weight of the English power, though not always wielded by the king from the best motives, or for the most useful purposes. The reign of this monarch, the first period of active and uniform interference in the transactions of the continent, showed that England was at least an efficient member of the great European republic; and that her relative power being once ascertained, its utility to herself or her neighbours would depend upon the wisdom or folly, the justice or injustice, of her directors.

The most momentous event by which Henry's reign is distinguished, is the reformation; a change accelerated by particular incidents, collisions of passion, and individual circumstances, but originating in general causes. Among these, on the one hand, were the scandalous profligacy of the clergy, the grasping rapacity of their avarice, the enormous usurpations of their ambition, the overweening insolence of their pride, and the gross ignorance of the great part of that immense body, multiplying the absurdities of superstition, which had overwhelmed the wisdom and the benevolence of the christian religion; and on the other, the progressive expansion of the human faculties, from that contracted state into which they had been confined about the expiration of the tenth century,* and from which, though slowly at first, they had since gradually extricated themselves. The understandings of men, enlightened by knowledge, became more acute and vigorous by exertion, and their moral discernment more just. That great engine of intellectual communication, the press, was now invented; men began to read, and to reason on what they did read. The bible, which had been so studiously concealed by the priesthood, was discovered and perused. Penetration, now assisted by learning, found out that many of the articles of faith, and injunctions of both ritual and moral practice, were not only incompatible with con-

* See Robertson's Charles V. vol. i.; and Hume's general observations on the predecessors of Henry VII. at the conclusion of the reign of Richard III.

[Causes which led to the Reformation. Consequences of that event.]

science, reason, and common sense, but opposite to genuine christianity as contained in the scriptures.

Finding so many defects in the superstructure, men gradually began to examine the basis. Such was the course which the renowned Luther pursued: who, perceiving the absurdity and wickedness of selling indulgencies to vice and profligacy, and demonstrating what he perceived, proceeded from one step of discovery to another, until he found that the whole system of papal superstition was raised upon an hypothesis totally inconsistent with history, experience, and reason; that its principle was the infallibility of a human being, which was obviously false, and consequently that the whole train of deductions depending upon this principle, were inadmissible on its authority. With the intrinsic absurdity of papal superstitions, which diffused reason and knowledge tended to dispel; with the profligacy of the clergy, which conscience prompted to reprobate and oppose; the policy and passions of princes and other individuals, no doubt, concurred in promoting the reformation commenced by Luther. Revived learning, however, raising human intellect to its real dignity, and through the press spreading its influence much more extensively than even in the enlightened ages of antiquity, soon destroyed ecclesiastical thralldom, and dispelled gloomy superstition. The metaphysical subtleties of one set of reformers might be different from those of another; but THE MOST ESSENTIAL AND VALUABLE PART OF THE REFORM, THE EMANCIPATION OF HUMAN REASON FROM THE CHAINS OF HUMAN AUTHORITY, sprang from the efforts of that reason, and was the source of the principal advantages, religious, moral, civil, and political, which resulted from this great revolution in the church. These changes, though operating chiefly in the country where enfranchised genius and learning had arrived at the highest pitch, were not confined to nations which formerly protested against the authority of an Italian clergyman, but extended to countries where the pope's supremacy was still acknowledged.

In protestant states, however, besides this great and general advantage from the overthrow of papal authority, many other more important benefits accrued, especially in England. Immense sums and demesnes, the tributes of superstition and credulity to hypocrisy, fraud, and imposture, or the exactions of tyrannic violence from the terrors of weakness, which had been employed in fostering sloth, idleness, and sensuality, were now amalgamated into the mass of national property, encouraged rising industry, and improved the public revenue. The reformation tended to promote agriculture, trade, manufactures, and private and public opulence, the means of national defence, security, prosperity, power, and glory. Thus a revolution, at first sight theological, became a most important event in the commercial history of Britain. It tended also to the improvement of English jurisprudence; by removing from that admirable system, all those pernicious incumbrances, which had been imposed on our laws by clerical artifice and usurpation, to shelter crimes.*

* Blackstone, vol. iv. c. 16 and 18, on the benefit of clergy; and chap. 83. on the progress of the law and constitution of England, fourth period, under Henry VIII.

[Character of Henry's reign. Edward VI. promotes navigation and commerce.]

By the reduction of the clerical aristocracy, the still enfeebled state of the lay aristocracy, and the hitherto slow progress of the commons; the abject servility of parliaments; the vigorous talents, inflexible temper, and violent passions of the sovereign; this reign, though ultimately conducive to liberty, was more absolute than any recorded in the English history. Though the open, liberal, and intrepid mind of the monarch, never exercised his authority in the treachery, dissimulation, and baseness, so prevalent in despotic courts, yet the ungovernable fury of his affections, the profusion and rapacity of his disposition, and the violence and capriciousness of his inclinations, with the fickle bigotry of his ever-changing theology, rendered him unjust, oppressive, tyrannical, and cruel. Under the sanction of those pusillanimous parliaments, the encroachments of monarchical power were established by law. But the political evils of Henry's reign, which resulted from individual character and special circumstances, were only temporary; the good arising from the general causes was permanent, and contained in itself the means of progressive improvement.

The short reign of Edward VI. tended in many respects to extend the advantages, and correct the mischiefs of Henry's government. Commerce and discovery made considerable advances at this period. The trade of England had hitherto been carried on chiefly by foreigners, especially by a corporate company from the Hans-towns, called the merchants of the Steelyard. In former reigns, these had engrossed a great part of the traffic with foreign countries, and employed German or Flemish shipping. This establishment, which was encouraged by Edward III. and succeeding princes, in order to teach the English commercial lessons, and excite mercantile emulation among them, had been long extremely useful. The council of young Edward perceiving that the reasons for encouraging these foreigners no longer existed, and that a spirit of mercantile adventure being now raised among the natives of England, such privileges enjoyed by aliens interfered with the national interest, found it necessary to annul them, and place all foreigners on an inferior footing to native subjects. This change contributed greatly to the advancement of commerce and navigation;* and a commercial treaty was concluded with Sweden, on the solid principle of reciprocal exchange of superfluity to supply mutual want.† The great fishery on the banks of Newfoundland became an object of attention, and was prosecuted with activity and success.‡ The English still cherished the idea of opening a communication with eastern riches, by a more expeditious course than the Cape of Good Hope. Cabot, so renowned for naval enterprise, urged the English, instead of steering towards the north-west, which had proved unsuccessful, to attempt the discovery of the desired passage by the north-east. At his instance, and under his direction, several noblemen and persons of rank, together with some principal merchants, having associated for this purpose, were incorporated by a charter, under the title of the Company of Merchants Adventurers for the discovery of regions, dominions, islands, and places unknown. Two ships and a bark were equipped for this

* See Hume.

† Ibid.

‡ Robertson's posthumous America, p. 16: and Hackluyt's voyages, *passim*.

[Repeals the tyrannical laws of his father. Mary.]

service; and though they failed in the great end of their expedition, one ship and the bark being lost, yet the other effected very important discoveries. An intercourse with the vast empire of Russia, before unknown to English adventurers, was opened; and, on the return of this ship, a mercantile company was formed for trading with Muscovy. Attempts were now made to open a communication with India and China by land, through the new connexion with Russia, by Astracan and the Caspian sea; and though the adventurers did not penetrate so far as they intended, yet they acquired a knowledge of the countries, commodities, and inhabitants of Turkey; which, combined with the maritime enterprises in the Mediterranean, laid the foundation of English commerce with the Ottomans. A commercial intercourse was also opened with the western coasts of Africa; while the traffic begun with Barbary was considerably extended in the reigns of Edward and Mary.

The war with Scotland, in which Henry had left his kingdom engaged, together with the factions which prevailed under the protectorship of Somerset and the administration of Warwick, prevented Edward from possessing on the continent that influence which his father had maintained. The distraction of English councils, and the connexion with Scotland, now so closely united by the affiancing of the dauphin with the infant queen, encouraged and stimulated the French monarch to attack England in war; and though hostilities were soon ended by a peace, the English, torn by dissensions, were losers by the treaty: nor did this kingdom afterwards, in the course of Edward's reign, interfere with effect in continental politics. The internal part of Edward's history is of the highest importance. The first session of his parliament repealed all the laws enacted through the arbitrary violence of Henry, which had tyrannically extended the crimes of treason and felony, and made heresy a capital offence.

The protestant religion was fully established, and though the reformation might not extend to every principle and doctrine which unfettered reason could impugn, yet it proceeded as far as the sentiments, knowledge, and character of the nation could bear. The reformation was great, though less violent and more gradual than in some other countries, where they laid the whole hierarchy prostrate; yet from its moderate and progressive nature it was the more likely to be durable. While it humbled the pride and ambition of the clergy, and restrained their avarice and profligacy, it left them rank and property to maintain the dignity conducive to the purposes of their office, in a country where great diversity of rank and property prevailed. Abolishing much useless pageantry, the English reformers, aware that men are as frequently led by their senses and imaginations, as swayed by their hearts and understandings, left a sufficient degree of pomp, ceremony, and accompaniment, to amuse the fancy, and please the eye and the ear, without substituting idolatry for real devotion.

The leading features of Mary's character, were, an ardent and boundless zeal for Romish bigotry, and an ungovernable love for the man whom she married. These passions, enhancing and inflaming each other, account for the most important transactions of her short and detestable reign. At once a religious and amorous devotee, she persecuted and butchered protestants, to please herself and her bi-

[Elizabeth. Augmentation of the navy.]

goted and cruel husband; while to gratify his wishes, and secure a greater portion of his company and love, she oppressed and exhausted her people, and engaged in a most impolitic and destructive war.* Humanity, patriotism, justice, every duty of morality and genuine christianity, were sacrificed to the violence of her affections. Many beneficial laws, however, were enacted in her reign, which, though proposed by Mary to reconcile the people to her schemes of restoring the Romish faith and hierarchy, and to her extortions of their money to lavish on her husband, produced permanent good, while the evil of being governed by the tool of such infuriating passions, was a temporary evil, and, fortunately for the kingdom, of short duration. The gloom was soon dispersed, and followed by the most resplendent brightness.

The reign of Elizabeth, so auspicious to the prosperity and happiness of her subjects, was extremely favourable to the rising spirit of navigation, discovery, and commerce. The peace, foreign and domestic, which her wisdom and firmness preserved with little interruption for almost the first thirty years of her reign, notwithstanding the hostile jealousy of surrounding nations, the furious passions which agitated the continent, and the discontent which bigotry and rivalry kindled or fanned in her own kingdom, were peculiarly conducive to the enterprising efforts of able, bold, and adventurous Englishmen. Strict and vigilant economy exempted her subjects from the burthen of taxes injurious to trade; the popularity of her administration among the greater part of her subjects, overawing disaffection and preventing commotion, left her people full liberty to pursue nautical and commercial enterprise. Undisturbed by the factions of a turbulent minority, or the cruel persecutions of frantic bigotry, the sagacious Elizabeth, like the greatest of her predecessors, saw that the security of a kingdom environed by the sea must depend on its naval force.

One of the first acts of her government was to increase the number and strength of her navy. Before her reign, the English had commonly been supplied with large ships by foreigners. The queen, desirous of having the resources of strength and the vehicles of riches furnished within her own kingdom, filled her arsenals with naval stores, promoted ship-building, and encouraged her subjects to bend their attention to pursuits which were destined to render themselves and their posterity eminent among nations. With this view she built several ships of great force and versatility; and as the skill of artificers improved, the number of sailors increased; and from the reign of Elizabeth may be dated the first regulation of the English navy. Her patronage and example stimulated and invigorated the efforts of her subjects in ship-building and nautical expeditions. Carefully examining the advances made under her predecessors, she improved their discoveries and acquisitions; cultivated and extended the connexion formed with the Russian sovereign; secured to her subjects the continuance of their exclusive and lucrative trade with his dominions; and encouraged the incorporated body of merchants enjoying that trade, to resume their endeavours of penetrating by land into eastern Asia. Their efforts were at length successful in opening

* See Hume's history of Mary, *passim*.

[*Voyages to America. First attempts at colonization.*]

a lucrative trade with Persia, which manifesting to her subjects the riches of the east, produced a resolution of resorting to these countries by sea.

As the English advanced in the knowledge of Asia and its productions, their ardour increased to discover a short nautical course to these opulent regions. Their disappointments in the northwest and northeast did not entirely chill their hopes: they still flattered themselves that they might discover an outlet which had hitherto baffled their inquiries; and Frobisher, in three successive voyages, explored the coasts of Labrador and of Greenland, but without discovering the northwest passage. Though the disappointment was sensibly felt, yet English courage and enterprise rose superior to disappointment. Sir Francis Drake, so renowned in naval history, determined to sail round the world: an undertaking hitherto achieved by Magellan only. Having successfully finished this formidable voyage, and acquired an accurate and distinct conception of the commodities both of the east and west, he inspirited his countrymen to bolder and more comprehensive schemes of naval and commercial enterprise, than any which they had hitherto attempted. The English had formerly seen and acknowledged themselves far surpassed in seamanship by the Flemings and Italians, and recently by the Portuguese, who were the first for naval reputation in the annals of history. They now rivalled that country in its most splendid enterprise: and having rapidly risen from inferiority to equality, they doubted not soon to attain a striking superiority. Having confirmed their skill, they felt their force; and perceived that the surrounding ocean, so long neglected, was an Englishman's element, on which he was destined to excel. They formed a notion eventually true, bold, and beneficial, that no object attainable by human ability exerted in maritime effort, is beyond the reach of English seamen; a nautical and commercial enthusiasm, therefore, diffused itself through the country.

English adventurers, having hitherto confined their efforts to visiting foreign and remote regions, and satisfied with present discovery and traffic, had made no attempt to form new settlements. Sir Humphry Gilbert, a gentleman of ingenuity and learning, enthusiastic for discovery, proposed to conduct a colony to America; and, having applied to the queen, obtained the first charter for a colonial establishment.* The charter authorized him to discover and take possession of all remote and barbarous lands, unoccupied by any christian prince and people; vested in him and his heirs the property of the soil of such countries, with the legislative power, and the civil and criminal jurisdiction over those who should settle in the new plantations. The laws and their administration were to be conformable to the polity of England, on which the new colony was still to depend. Arbitrary as the powers thus confirmed were, such was the spirit of adventure now prevalent, that many agreed to conform to the conditions, and became Gilbert's associates. In his undertaking he was assisted and accompanied by his half-brother Walter Raleigh, afterwards so renowned in political and literary history. Two expeditions which Gilbert conducted to Newfoundland and Cape Breton ended disastrously. In the last, the leader himself perished. The undaunted spirit of Raleigh, not disappointed by

* Robertson's posthumous *America*, p. 33.

[Wise internal policy of the queen. *Commercial compacity*]

this miscarriage, projected a new scheme of colonization. After procuring a similar charter from the queen, adopting his brother's ideas, but avoiding his errors, he resolved to steer a much more southern course, and also to send trusty officers to explore the country, before he should attempt a settlement. On their return they reported, that they had found in southern latitudes a most beautiful country, distinguished for fertility of soil, and mildness of climate; of which they had taken possession in her majesty's name and called it Virginia, as a memorial that this happy discovery had been made under a virgin queen. Raleigh accordingly fitted out a squadron, and planted in that country the first colony ever established by Englishmen. The new colonists, however, in the eagerness of their search after the precious mines with which they supposed the new world in every part to abound, neglected the means of subsistence. Being on the point of perishing with famine, they returned to England. Raleigh made a second attempt to establish a colony; but he and other patrons of the settlement being called to defend their country against the invasion of Philip, this colony also failed. Vigorous, beneficial, and glorious as the administration of Elizabeth proved, it was not very favourable to schemes of doubtful and contingent advantage, or to what in modern mercantile language are called speculations; and plans of new establishments were in her reign carried on at the expense and risk of individuals. Besides, the wisdom and felicity of her internal government promoted agriculture,* manufactures, commerce, the means of subsistence, convenience, and comfort; and as it bestowed security on her subjects for the enjoyment of their manifold advantages, was not favourable to emigration. But though the first attempts to plant colonies were unsuccessful, the spirit of colonization excited in the reign of Elizabeth, continuing to prevail and increase afterwards, produced in colonies most abundant sources of British opulence and power. Eager as Elizabeth was for the encouragement and extension of trade, in order to cherish it in its infant state, she granted many monopolies; which, though probably necessary at the time, would, if they had continued, have proved destructive to that commerce they were intended to promote.† The principal companies established by Elizabeth were the Russian and the Turkish, and one which was destined far to surpass either in the momentous interests that it involved. Near the close of this long and illustrious reign, John Lancaster pro-

* A law was made in the fifth of Elizabeth, allowing for the first time the exportation of corn. To this enactment, Camden imputes the great improvement of agriculture.

† Our great commercial philosopher in a few words states the reasons for monopolies so clearly and strongly, and illustrates them by such apposite analogies, as to present at one view the extent and bounds which policy allows and prescribes to trading corporations. "When," says he, "a company of merchants undertake at their own risk and expence to establish a new trade with some remote and barbarous nation, it may not be unreasonable to incorporate them into a joint stock company, and to grant them, in case of their success, a monopoly of the trade for a certain number of years. It is the easiest and most natural way in which the state can recompense them for hazarding a dangerous and extensive experiment, of which the public is afterwards to reap the benefit. A temporary monopoly of this kind may be vindicated upon the same principles upon which a like monopoly of a new machine is granted to its inventor, and that of a new book to its author; but upon the expiration of the term, the monopoly ought certainly to be determined." *Wealth of Nations*, vol. iii. p. 144.

[East India company. Spanish Armada.]

posing to measure part of the course of sir Francis Drake, undertook a trading expedition to India. A charter was granted to the adventurers, at whose expense the enterprise was undertaken, and they were formed into a corporation, under the name of the East India Company. The first attempt by Englishmen to participate in the trade of India, being eminently successful, encouraged future adventurers. Thus the reign of this princess very strongly and effectually promoted agriculture, internal and foreign trade, maritime skill and enterprise, the means of subsisting, enriching, and aggrandizing the people intrusted to her care.

Under this extraordinary personage, nautical effort was not merely encouraged as the means of opulence, but of defence, of security, and of power. France, at this time engaged in intestine wars by the bigoted frenzy of furious religionists, and with all her resources possessing scarcely any commerce, was totally deficient in naval force. Philip, who included in his dominions the experienced sailors of the Low Countries and of Italy; the Spaniards, who from their intercourse with the new world were inured to nautical exertion and enterprise; and by recent usurpation, the Portuguese, who far surpassed all their neighbours in naval fame, appeared undoubted master of the ocean, and able to crush at a blow every opponent. This mighty engine, which, if moved and directed by wisdom and skill, would have been so efficient and formidable, in the hands of bigotry, superstition, and impolicy was at once enormous and inert. Part, indeed, of the machine, torn from the rest by tyranny, recoiled upon its former owner. Philip's civil and ecclesiastical despotism rendered the bold and skilful sailors of the Low Countries eagerly hostile to a power which attempted to overwhelm their rights and liberties. The gloomy zealot, enraged against Elizabeth for protecting her own religion and that of her people against his superstition; the imperious tyrant, enraged against Elizabeth as the protector of freemen who durst vindicate their own rights, though contrary to a despot's will; meditated a blow by which he expected to subjugate England, and to involve the country and its allies in civil and religious thralldom. For this purpose he equipped the Armada, which he vainly fancied and denominated invincible. Elizabeth, in preparing and strengthening a navy, had not been guided solely by the general policy which dictated maritime force as the means of defence in insular situation; but having discovered the purposes, motives, and plans of her most potent neighbour and rival, she had recently directed her peculiar attention to the increase of a fleet. In this pursuit, she was seconded by the efforts of her subjects, who were inspired with that patriotic loyalty, which the wisdom and virtues of a sovereign exerted for the public good, choosing ministers and other executorial officers according to their fitness to promote the national welfare, and actually effecting the ease and happiness of the people, never fail to produce among Englishmen. These dispositions, guided by private and individual skill, combining with armaments prepared by her foresight and headed by commanders selected by her sagacity, discomfited the opérose equipment of her foe. From that time, England became mistress of the ocean; her sailors thenceforward conceived themselves superior to those of all other nations. The conception powerfully contributed

[Continental policy of Elizabeth.]

to the attainment of reality. Since that time, defeat, disaster, and disgrace, have never failed to follow those who have presumed to brave England on her own element. The same reign witnessed the first regular formation of an English navy, and its supremacy over all other naval powers. So eminently and decidedly successful in defensive effort, the English undertook repeated expeditions to the coasts of their enemies; and though the issue of them was not always, it was generally prosperous. Spain was humbled, and England was exalted.

Respecting foreign politics, Elizabeth was placed in a situation of infinitely greater difficulty than her father, or any of her predecessors. Religious bigotry was the chief spring which moved the most powerful princes on the continent; their very ambition was subservient and instrumental to their theological fanaticism. France, instead of watching the motions and repressing the encroachments of the house of Austria, devoted her principal attention to the persecution of heretics, and joined in all the dark and nefarious designs of the pope, Spain, and the emperor. According to the sentiments and opinions of popish sovereigns and people, Elizabeth was not the rightful sovereign of England, because she was not approved of by an Italian priest. The legitimate successor to the crown, according to popish interpretation, was the queen of Scotland, a bigoted catholic, and a near relation of the ablest and most ferocious champion of the catholic league. Elizabeth was not, like her father, so situated, as to trim the balance between the rival potentates of France and Austria, and to turn the scale according to her judgment or choice. Much more difficult was her part, to secure the independence of her people, and of others whose interests were closely connected with theirs, against a general confederacy of priests and arbitrary princes, of bigotry and despotism, banded in atrocious barbarity, in order to disseminate articles of theological belief. In the time of Henry VIII. England showed she could maintain the balance of power. Under Elizabeth, in preserving that balance, England assumed the character which she has, except in the reigns of the Stuarts, ever since maintained, of supporting the rights and independence of Europe against the powerful disturbers of its tranquillity. Such was the relation in which Elizabeth stood to foreign countries. Too vigorous in understanding and profound in wisdom to be a bigot, or to estimate modes of faith by any other test than their conduciveness to private and public welfare, in her choice of religion, she was guided by prudent policy, founded in her own situation, and the sentiments and interests of the greater part of her people.* It was expedient that she should be at the head of the protestants. Fortunately, in the two countries, more contiguous to her kingdom and of which the sovereigns, both from joint and separate motives, were well disposed to give her disturbance. the number of protestants was very great; so as in France to afford sufficient employment to the popish combination at home, and in Scotland to be fully established, and totally paramount to the party which from theological sympathy was favoured by the sovereign. So thoroughly wise and prudent was Elizabeth, that for twenty-nine

* See Hume's account of Elizabeth's reasons for re-establishing the protestant religion, vol. ii. p. 565.

[Ecclesiastical and political establishments. Tendency of her reign.]

years she discomfited all the designs and conspiracies of popish devotees against her person and kingdom; supported the protestants in France, Germany, and the Low Countries; and furious, implacable, and savage, as was the hatred of the confederate princes to every supporter of the protestant cause, and above all to Elizabeth, she never involved herself in hostilities; but when the aggressive invasion of Philip rendered war unavoidable, she showed that the same wisdom and strength of mind which had maintained peace, so beneficial to rising industry and commerce, could carry on war with effect when necessary for the security of her country. In her latter years, policy as well as kindred genius, and wisdom allied her to the illustrious Henry of France. The catholic league being now broken, and the power of Philip reduced, there being no longer a popish pretender to the crown, the chief difficulties of both her internal and foreign relations ceased; and the queen and country, which in such trying circumstances had arisen to a pitch of high importance, were regarded by foreign states with an admiration that never before had been so universally bestowed upon the efforts of England.

In her ecclesiastical conduct and establishments, Elizabeth, guided by policy, and not stimulated by bigotry, was usually moderate, but on certain occasions led to acts of intolerance. As long as the Roman catholics confined themselves to their own theological doctrines, and did not disturb her government, she permitted them to enjoy their opinions without molestation; but when she found them engaged in conspiracies against her life, she and her parliament enacted very severe laws respecting a system of faith producing plots for treason and assassination. These laws, though intended chiefly to operate for the discouragement of popery, afterwards applied to other dissenters from the established church. A sect was now rising in England, composed of those who thought the reform as established by Edward and restored by Elizabeth inadequate to the corruptions of the church, and who, professing to seek a greater degree of purity, were thence called Puritans. Beginning to seek civil as well as ecclesiastical liberty, they were by no means agreeable to Elizabeth, whose notions of kingly prerogative, being formed when the power of the crown, from the depression of the aristocracy and before the elevation of the commons, was so predominant, were extremely lofty. For the repression of puritanical doctrines, she established the court of ecclesiastical commission; a most arbitrary tribunal, which, in the powers vested, the jurisdiction conferred, the modes of process established, and the punishments prescribed, was not less iniquitous than the popish inquisition, though, from the wise moderation of Elizabeth, much more mildly exercised than by a Philip or an Alva.

In her government, Elizabeth, like all the princes of the house of Tudor, was extremely absolute. A spirit of liberty, however, had begun to rise, which, though fostered by the wise and beneficial conduct of Elizabeth, was certainly not intended by her to be cherished. The industry and enterprise which she encouraged and promoted, diffused property among the commons; that property nourished independence, and joined with advancing reason and knowledge in disseminating a spirit of freedom. The government, however, of the queen,

[Literature. Great merit of Elizabeth. James.]

though imperious, yet generally lenient, did not irritate this new spirit by particular acts of oppression, tyranny, or cruelty. Her conduct steadily and wisely directed to the interests of her people, rendered her extremely popular. Her manners, engaging and insinuating, increased the attachment of her people. From her character and situation, the greater number of her subjects considered her welfare as identified with their own. The most strenuous votaries of liberty were the most inimical to popery, against the approaches of which they considered Elizabeth as the strongest bulwark. From attachment to a sovereign in whom they experienced so many excellencies, and also from awe of so very resolute and intrepid a character, they yielded a submission to the authority of Elizabeth, which they by no means thought due to the mandates of kingly power.

The literature which Elizabeth encouraged tended also to promote the spirit of freedom. The writers of Greece and Rome, inculcating so strongly and impressively the principles and sentiments of liberty, were now very generally read among the higher and middling ranks. Genius, no longer fettered by priestly enactments, soared aloft; and though not immediately directed to political discussion, yet by enlightening and invigorating men's minds, prepared them for just notions respecting their rights, and bold and manly conduct in asserting their liberties. The reign of Elizabeth, though like her father's manifestly arbitrary, has in its ultimate tendency and effects, proved favourable to freedom. Thus in the various constituents of internal prosperity and happiness, and in estimation and importance among foreign powers, England never made such advances as under the very long but much more glorious reign of Elizabeth. Considered as a rational being, placed in authority, and intrusted with the government of mankind, examined according to the circumstances of her situation, the duties required, her discharge of those duties, and the result in the condition in which she ~~FOUND~~ ^{FOUND} AND ~~LEFT~~ ^{LEFT} her subjects, (the true criterion of a ruler's ability or weakness as a ~~SOVEREIGN~~,*) no prince that ever filled a throne surpassed Elizabeth.

Different as was the character of James from that of his illustrious predecessor, his reign was in many respects conducive to industry, commerce, and the internal prosperity of the kingdom, though it generated disputes which were eventually productive of the most fatal conclusions. Endued with scholastic learning and pedantry, fitter for being a Latin lecturer on controversial divinity in a sequestered college, than for being the ruler of a great, bold, and enterprising nation, James possessed two qualities often resulting from literary seclusion: he was extremely indolent, and extremely timid; and therefore a lover of peace. The pursuits of his subjects rendered his pacific character beneficial.

The spirit of industry, adventure, and trade, being uninterrupted by foreign wars, greatly increased in the reign of James. The traffic with the East Indies was now entirely established, the stock of the company was considerably enlarged, and its profits became every year more

* This is the light in which the expanded mind of Hume considers our illustrious queen; disregarding such foibles, as, though they might mark part of her character, did not interfere with her administration of affairs, powerful, constant, and successful promotion of the public good.

[Increase of national prosperity. Establishment of colonies.]

extensive. The trade of Turkey was advantageous ; a lucrative commerce was opened with Spain and the mercantile intercourse with Russia and other northern countries increased in productiveness. The export trade greatly surpassed the import, which, though no certain criterion of a flourishing commerce,* proved that English commodities were numerous and valuable. James perceived the hurtful tendency of monopolies, and considerably lessened their number and importance. Manufactures advanced in a similar proportion, and especially woollen commodities: The king eagerly promoted English cloths, and laboured to prevent the exportation of raw materials, to be manufactured in foreign countries for English consumption.†

In a commercial view, this reign was chiefly distinguished by the colonies which were planted, and established on principles the most beneficial of any recorded in the history of colonization. The pacific disposition and conduct of James were favourable to new plantations. The planters were not interrupted in their settlements by foreign enemies, and the force sent for their establishment was not obliged to be recalled for the defence of the mother country. Bold and enterprising adventurers, who languished in inaction during the peace, found in colonial projects a new field for active exertion. A most strenuous promoter of plantations was Richard Hackluyt, eminent for commercial and nautical knowledge. That he might stimulate his countrymen to new efforts, this experienced navigator published a collection of voyages and discoveries made by Englishmen: he comprehended the proper objects of inquiry and research concerning new countries, understood the fresh information that arrived, and saw to what purpose it might be most usefully supplied. In the last year of Elizabeth, by Hackluyt's suggestion, Gosnold undertook a voyage to America, and pursued a direct and middle course between the northern route of sir Humphry Gilbert, and the southern circuit of sir Walter Raleigh. Gosnold having reached a country called Massachusetts Bay, coasted to the southwest, landed on the continent, traded with its inhabitants, and having ascertained the fertility of the country, returned to England. Having learned these particulars, he combined them with what was before known concerning Virginia; and, after consulting with other men of ability and enterprise, proposed an association for establishing colonies in America. The king, being petitioned, sanctioned the project with his authority. Informed of the extent, and in some degree of the value, of the American lands, he divided into two districts the portion of the continent which he intended to plant: the first, to be called the South Colony of Virginia; the second, the North Colony of New-England. The projected plantations were intrusted to the care of exclusive companies; a system conducive to the protection of infant colonies; though adverse to the prosperity of settlements arrived at mature vigour. Associated under the name of the London Company, Hackluyt and others received a grant of lands, and were authorized to settle a colony in Virginia. Several gentlemen and merchants of the west of England, incorporated under the name of the Plymouth Company, obtained a similar

* See *Wealth of Nations*: and the marquis of Lansdowne's speech on the commercial treaty with France, in answering bishop Watson.

† Hume, vol. iii. p. 382.

[Republicanism in New England. Ireland. Continental policy.]

grant and authority for colonizing New-England. On each were bestowed charters, which, though inconsistent with the enlightened and generous spirit of liberty that has since prevailed in this country, were by no means deficient in security to property, and encouragement to industry. The southern colony was first established in the early part of James's reign. Having left their country before the disputes between kingly prerogative and popular privilege were publicly agitated, the new planters carried with them notions, opinions, and sentiments, favourable to the church and monarchy, and transmitted them to their posterity.

The first attempt to colonize the north proved unsuccessful, nor was the settlement finally effected till near the end of the reign, when great dissensions began to prevail. The planters of New-England were chiefly men, who, discontented with the established church and monarchy, sought for freedom in the wilds of America. Afterwards receiving accessions of voluntary exiles from the persecutions of narrow and impolitic bigotry, they formed a colony, which was inimical to kings and bishops, and preserved that character to the present age.

Differing in pursuit from the Spanish conquerors of the New World, the English settlers sought and acquired property, not from the bowels of the earth, but from the surface of the soil, and the bounties of the ocean liberally rewarded the efforts of active and enterprising industry. The spirit of their institutions joined with the productiveness of their situation rapidly promoting colonial prosperity.

To the policy of James, the nation is indebted for the regulation of Ireland. His measures amended and secured the tenure of property, established the administration of justice, stimulated industry and the arts, and constituted an important branch in the progressive improvement of the British dominions.

In his intercourse with foreign nations, this king was far from preserving to his country that weight and consideration which his predecessors had acquired. Though the feeble and inactive hands of the English sovereign were not qualified to hold the balance of Europe, yet the state of affairs rendered his inertness safe to his own country, and not injurious to the independence of other nations. Henry IV. had harmonized his kingdom, lately so discordant; and turned to arts and industry those bold and active spirits that had been recently actuated by religious frenzy, and rendered France a sufficient counterpoise for the unwieldy greatness of Spain. After the death of her renowned monarch, from her own strength, and the ability of her minister, she fully maintained her weight in the scale. The conquest of the Palatinate deemed so disgraceful to James, was too distant an event to affect the political interests of England, and the forbearance of the king might be justified upon principles of prudent policy. But as his motives were presumed to be his constitutional and habitual indolence and timidity; his conduct was exposed to mortifying contempt. He almost daily was trying treaties to obtain the re-establishment of the elector, but without displaying that firmness and force which most effectually promote English negotiations for repressing ambition.

In the political government of his kingdom several errors of the understanding, and weaknesses rather than vices of the heart, com-

[The king's lofty ideas of prerogative unsuited to his character and the times.]

bined with the circumstances of the times, and produced dissatisfaction and discontent very troublesome to himself, and fatal to his son. James entertained lofty ideas of kingly prerogative, totally incompatible with the real purpose of any delegated trust, and much beyond the limits prescribed by our fundamental laws, but perfectly conformable to the practice of the house of Tudor. He did not perceive the great difference of the case, both as to the characters of the princes, and the opinion and power of the subjects. The Tudors were more fitted to secure submission by cool, stern, and determined policy; to terrify resistance by energetic, though capricious and violent command; or to exact obedience, and to ensure compliance, through the awe, veneration, and attachment entertained by subjects for the magnanimity, wisdom, and patriotism of the sovereign. A great class of men had now arisen, not only disposed, but able to question any branch of the asserted prerogative, which they considered as unnecessary or injurious to the only legitimate object of government. In his disposition and administration, James was neither tyrannical nor imperious, but delighting in discourse and speculative dissertation, he talked much more about the divine right of kings, than all the princes of the house of Tudor, who had contented themselves with exercising absolute dominion without searching into political metaphysics. James provoked and accelerated discussions about prerogative, to which the commons were already sufficiently prone, and which his indolent, irresolute and timid character farther encouraged. The king's theology concurred with his political sentiments in promoting discontent. From the study of polemic divinity, he was the sincere votary of the high church doctrines, and a zealous advocate of hierarchy. The strenuous friends of liberty were inimical to popery, which they accused the king of regarding too favourably. His refusal to reduce the power of the high commission court, whilst he granted every indulgence to catholics, being construed into a predilection for the Romish doctrines, and a hatred of the puritans, exasperated the spirit of liberty, already so strong in the commons. Another feature in the king's character, by helping to disgust his subjects, conduced to the depression of the kingly name; his indiscreet and boundless attachment to frivolous and contemptible favourites; and the promotion of the minions of his childish fondness, to offices for which they were totally unfit. The people very naturally and reasonably concluded, that a person can prove no divine right to govern a kingdom, who shows himself so very deficient in wisdom, as, in choosing a minister of state, to consider merely personal graces, and courtly manners. Contending with such a prince, the commons were both emboldened and empowered to show him, that absolute power had no longer subsisted in England; that they were prepared to vindicate the rights and liberties of freemen; and that his boasting claims would only challenge stronger confutation, and his eager but feeble opposition produce farther demands. Absurd and extravagant as their theological cant and pretensions might be, the puritans were hitherto actuated by an elevated and noble spirit of civil and political freedom, which every Briton who justly appreciates the blessings of the present constitution must acknowledge with veneration and gratitude. Their talents and conduct were well fitted for promoting the

[Disputes between the king and commons. Charles I. follows his father's footsteps.]

attainment of liberty; they proceeded cautiously and gradually, and enlarged their views and systematized their plans, as their cause became popular and the opposite obnoxious. The king employed rash and violent letters and speeches,* to which they opposed prudent, vigorous, and decisive conduct. The course of contest produced the celebrated manifesto in which the commons of England first boldly, openly, and precisely declared, that the representatives of the people held certain liberties, franchises, and privileges, not as grants of the king, but as the rights of freeborn Englishmen. Though James expressed great rage against the contents and authors of this paper, yet he was afterwards obliged to court his parliament, to gratify them by passing several popular laws, and by his concessions to acknowledge that there was in the country a power fully equal to the king's, and arising from the strength of the people. The latter end of James's reign is a most important epoch in the constitutional history of England, as then first the commons proved their own force.

James educated and formed his son Charles in the same political and theological sentiments and doctrines which he had himself maintained, professed, and inculcated. Notwithstanding his own experience of the change of public opinion, and of political power, he had taken no pains to model the prince according to the present dispositions and character of the people whom he was destined to govern. Young Charles very naturally imbibed his father's instructions, and conceived the kingly prerogative to be such as James represented and argued, and as Elizabeth had exercised. Sincere in his profession, this prince was a zealous votary of the high church; directed in his opinions and doctrines by prelates, and especially by Laud, he was confirmed in his notions of the divine right of kings, and the inseparable connexion between episcopacy and monarchy. With such principles and sentiments, so very contrary to those of a great, powerful, and increasing body of his countrymen, on the death of his father, Charles mounted the throne.

The unlimited power of Buckingham, James's minion, having overborne the pacific maxims of the king, and involved him in hostilities with Spain, Charles at his accession found himself engaged in a war. As the contest was professedly popular, he reasonably expected the support of his people and parliament; but the supplies voted were very inadequate to the expenses requisite for the arduous undertaking. The leaders of the commons determined to persevere in the establishment of a free constitution, considered the necessities of the prince as conducive to their purpose, and resolved to grant no subsidies without a redress of grievances, and concessions favourable to civil liberty. Amiable and affectionate, Charles was warm and steady in his attachments, though not proportionably judicious in the selection of objects. Thence he had maintained Buckingham in the high favour and trust little deserved by his talents and virtues, and obnoxious to the parliament and public. He not only protected this minister against the just resentment of the commons, but, instigated by his councils, he adopted iniquitous measures for extorting loans, and invading the property of Englishmen without their own consent. A

* See Hume's History.

[Violation of the petition of rights. Series of oppression rouses resistance.]

series of acts, flagrantly violating the privileges of Englishmen, alarmed and aroused the commons.

Opposing firm and profound wisdom to the desultory and illegal oppression of the court, their strong, discriminating, and bold remonstrance procured, in the petition of right, a demarkation of the limits by which liberty and property were secured. Notwithstanding the king's engagement, incurred by his consent to the petition of right, he for many years continued regularly and systematically to transgress the established laws of England; to imprison, fine, and corporally punish men, without the judgment of their peers; to deprive them of their property, and compel them to pay subsidies without the consent of their representatives; and by manifold unconstitutional, lawless, and tyrannical acts, to oppress his subjects.* Virtuous in his domestic and private life, Charles, in relation to his kingdom, disregarded justice and the rights of the people, as much as if he had been wicked and tyrannical.

His chief instruments of oppression were the star chamber, which subjected liberty and property to the privy council, instead of the peers of the accused; and the high court of commission, subjecting liberty, property, and life, to an arbitrary body, also not constituted of the defendant's peers. Though these tribunals subsisted in the time of Elizabeth, they were not only contrary to the great charter and other fundamental laws of England, but totally inconsistent with the principal clauses of the petition of right, as admitted by Charles himself. The chief agents in this oppressive violation of the constitution were Strafford and Laud. The vigorous ability and stern imperiousness of the one, and the narrow bigotry and priestly tyranny of the other, instigating the pliant Charles, produced iniquitous judgments and punishments, and unconstitutionally extorted money by arbitrary violence, but eventually hastened the vindication of rightful liberty. Even the frivolous mummary of Laud's innovating ceremonies, though in itself merely laughable, yet indicating a predilection for popery, added to the alarm of the reforming party, and their impatience under the lawless acts of this domineering ecclesiastic.†

The usurpations of Charles and his ministers were destined to have a speedy end. Goaded by oppression, liberty rushed forward with an overpowering force. Hampden, with manly breast resisting exaction unauthorized by the law, roused the votaries of freedom through the nation. Charles's unbounded love of liturgy excited from the north fresh enemies to his administration. Necessitated to call a parliament, the unhappy prince found that the members brought with them a much stronger spirit of opposition and resistance than had prevailed among their predecessors. In their very first acts they boldly showed, that the commons of England were not only determined to restrain, but to abolish iniquitous tribunals, however sanctioned by precedent; to punish tyrannical violators of the rights of the people, however supported by court favour; and to enforce the redress of grievances in church and state. So far as these votaries of freedom intended to limit the boundaries of kingly power according to its legitimate

* See Hume's History, vol. iii. chap. 52.

† See Hume's account of the consecration of St. Catharine's church by Laud, vol. iii. p. 449.

[Raging spirit of freedom. Unjust prosecution of Strafford and Laud. Civil wars.]

object, the public good, and to prevent a repetition of tyranny, their purpose was beneficent, patriotic, and meritorious. The legislative and political transactions of this memorable parliament, during the first period of its operations, entitle its members to the highest praise and gratitude from the lovers of liberty, and all the subjects of the British constitution. These intrepid votaries of freedom these resolute opponents of kingly and priestly tyranny, saved their country from civil and ecclesiastical thraldom, which Charles's priests and ministers were so rapidly imposing. Had it not been for them, England, like France, would have been a simple despotism, subjecting the rights and happiness of a whole people to the arbitrary will and caprice of a single individual.

With this generous zeal for liberty, was joined a repugnance to all authority, however salutary and expedient; a spirit of democratical and puritanical enthusiasm, seeking to level all ranks and distinctions, however necessary to the stability and well-being of society. Actuated by these principles and sentiments, the opponents of the king did not rest satisfied with measures and acts which restrained the monarchical and clerical power from being oppressive and tyrannical. No sooner had they accomplished that important and valuable purpose, than they proceeded to reductions preventing them from being active, efficient, and useful; and after their first year, the parliament (especially the commons) became turbulent and republican. In resisting ship-money, abolishing the star-chamber and high court of commission, circumscribing executive power within the bounds of law and the rights and welfare of the people, the commons were the protecting guardians of British liberty; but when, in their second year, they sought and attempted to grasp the chief provinces of the executorial power, they became enemies of the constitution. In their judicial proceedings, the popular leaders, patriotically and justly attacked the counsellors and ministers of tyranny; but in the mode of prosecuting and trying Strafford and Laud, the accusers charging, and the judges admitting, acts to be treason, which were not treason by the law of the land, both commons and peers were guilty of much greater and more irreparable tyranny, than any against which they had so properly and strongly remonstrated. From their meeting in 1640 to the close of 1641, they vindicated and secured the constitutional and beneficial rights, privileges, and liberties of English subjects: in 1642, they attacked no less constitutional and beneficial powers delegated for the national good to an English king: and demonstrated how natural it is for wise and able men, ardent in pursuit of an object good within certain bounds, to transgress those limits; and after having begun with what was right, useful, and even necessary, to end in what is wrong, hurtful, and pernicious. Not only the particular acts, but the general conduct of the king, during the first fourteen years of his reign, recoiled dreadfully on himself, and showed how dangerous it is for the chief executive magistrate of a free people, by galling oppression, to drive liberty to energetic resistance.

The civil wars, and their dismal catastrophe in regicide, democratic anarchy, and military despotism, manifest the direful effects of popular and prevalent enthusiasm, even though it may have originated in the noble spirit of liberty. Lawless oppression drove a free, bold,

[Increase of commerce. Colonies. Virginia. New-England.]

and generous people, to decisive efforts, at first lawful and laudable.* In their progress, their measures became aggressive, and in their success, levelled monarchy with the dust; and instead of rational and modified liberty, established a boundless license, terminated by military despotism.

Left to private enterprise, commerce increased and flourished more than at any former period. The trade to the East Indies and to Guinea became very considerable. The commerce to Turkey and the Mediterranean was also greatly enlarged. With Spain, inimical to Holland, England now enjoyed almost the sole traffic. Under the commonwealth, the prevalence of republican principles engaged country gentlemen to bind their sons apprentices to merchants, and commerce has ever since been more honourable in England than in any other European kingdom. Trade received great interruption from the civil wars; but under the republic and the protectorate, it revived with augmented vigour. The war with the states-general, carried on with such energy, distressed the commerce of the Dutch, and promoted the trade of England, their only formidable commercial rival. The exclusive companies, which formerly confined trade, were never expressly abolished by any ordinance of parliament, during the commonwealth; but as men paid no regard to the prerogative, whence the charters of these companies were derived, the monopoly was gradually invaded, and commerce increased by the increase of liberty.†

The colonies also now afforded a considerable vent for English merchandise. Virginia, strictly subject to an exclusive corporation, experienced the various impediments necessarily resulting from the selfish and monopolising views of such companies; but by the advantage of its soil and climate triumphed over these obstacles. Its colonists found it peculiarly adapted to the cultivation of tobacco, a plant for which the relish was becoming very general throughout Europe. The Virginians rendered this their staple commodity. Having purchased some negroes from a Dutch ship, which visited them from the coast of Guinea, they found the natives of the torrid zone so much more capable of enduring fatigue under a sultry climate than Europeans, that they afterwards increased their number by continual importation.

New-England received in the time of Charles I. numerous additions of emigrants, and increased in population and power. Paying little regard to the royal charter, by which they were first associated, the planters considered themselves as a society voluntarily united; and choosing a constitution framed on the model of England, they formed four colonies into confederated states, and asserted that they should be bound by no laws to which they themselves did not assent, and subject to no taxes imposed in an assembly wherein they were

* This opinion is sanctioned by the authority of Mr. Hume, vol. ii. p. 496. Mr. Hume, indeed, though called an apologist for the Stuarts, merely states their conduct to be natural, without vindicating it as just, or entitled to the submissive acquiescence of their subjects. See the history of those reigns, *passim*. on the other hand, while he exposes the evils of political fanaticism, he allows the puritans to be the saviours of English liberty.

† See Hume's History of England, vol. iv.

[Navigation act. Decline of Spain and rise of France.]

not represented. Within a few years of their plantation, the colonists of New-England manifested the same spirit, and vindicated the same rights, which a century and a half afterwards produced a refusal of British taxation, and independence on the British crown. The coincidence of their sentiments with those of the English republicans, rendered the New-Englanders particularly favourable under the commonwealth. Unfettered in their industry and pursuits, they grew in internal prosperity and strength, and promoted the trade and navigation of the mother country. To secure to Britain the commerce of her rising colonies, as well as to extend her general trade, nautical exertions and naval power, was the great object of the navigation act, the most important and memorable of commercial statutes. This act, and subsequent regulations, originating in the same principle, but comprehending greater varieties of articles and details, secured to England an exclusive commerce with her colonies; and formed and methodized the monopoly into a regular and complete system. It farther, in imposing a necessity of employing British sailors, very powerfully increased our best means of security and defence. With trade, the naval force of the kingdom improved. The ship-money, so illegally levied by Charles, was applied to the professed purpose. The English fleet in his time was powerful, though not employed in war. Cromwell, energetic and efficient in every object which he pursued, had a navy, as well as an army, superior to all his enemies.

During the reigns of both James and Charles, England appeared to have almost totally forgotten the affairs of the continent, though requiring her watchful attention. Spain, under a succession of weak princes and incapable ministers, was fast declining in power. The German branch of the house of Austria was reduced and humiliated by the heroic Gustavus, and his gallant Swedes. The bold, vigorous, and intrepid Richelieu, operating upon the French character, was fast raising his country in power and energy. The great objects of that celebrated minister were, to render the monarchy internally and externally efficient. He proposed to effect these purposes, by subduing the Hugonots, frequently rebels against the established government; by humbling the princes and nobles, who often opposed the power of the crown; and by curbing the house of Austria, the chief enemy of French greatness. His consummate ability, directing the councils and efforts of his country, accomplished these objects. He conquered the protestants, disconcerted and overcame the grandees at home, and rendered France a monarchy entirely absolute. Abroad, he made very considerable progress in his scheme of humbling the house of Austria. In his time, France resumed her station, and was the most powerful empire on the continent. Cardinal Mazarine, succeeding Richelieu not only in his ministry, but in his designs, discomfited the factious princes and nobles, and completed what Richelieu had so far advanced. Every year aggrandized France, and reduced the power of Spain and the emperor. The French generals and soldiers acquired daily a greater ascendant over the Spaniards. Almost constantly victorious in a long war, and having detached from her rival, by revolt, dominions so productive, France was now become obviously and eminently preponderant in the scale of Europe. Such was her situation, when Oliver Cromwell became supreme director of English affairs.

[Continental policy of Cromwell. Literature and Science. The restoration.]

The character, efforts, and achievements of this renowned usurper commanded from foreign powers an admiration and deference bestowed on no English ruler since the time of Elizabeth. The belligerent nations saw, that England, directed and invigorated by Cromwell, could give victory to whatever party he chose to embrace. Each courted him with the most flattering and humble solicitations. If Cromwell had thoroughly understood and regarded the interests of his country, he would have supported the declining fortunes of Spain, against the dangerous ambition of France; and preserved the balance of power, on which the greatness and security of England so much depended. Allured, however, by the prospect of conquest and plunder among the Spanish settlements in the New World, and their ships on the intervening ocean, he threw his weight into the scale which was already preponderant, and contributed his powerful efforts to the exaltation of an empire most formidable to England.

From the time of the reformation, England had been eminently distinguished for the very highest efforts of literary genius. Among many writers more remarkable for sublimity and force than beauty and elegance, she had to boast a philosopher, whom Aristotle himself did not surpass in extent of knowledge and depth of investigation, in expansion of views, power of invention, and importance of discovery; an epic poet, whom Homer did not excel in sublimity, in pathos, and in force of character; a dramatic poet, whom not any, nor all the illustrious writers for the ancient stage, exceeded or equalled, in the knowledge or exhibition of man. A very considerable degree of learning was diffused, mingled with an incorrect taste, and tinctured by either the superstitious bigotry, or the puritanical fanaticism, so generally prevalent. The predominant enthusiasm formed characters great and energetic, but not pleasing and beneficial. Gloomy in its tenets, visionary in its fancies, austere in its observances, and dismal in its external appearance, it effected a very striking change in the national manners; but the alteration was only temporary. Doctrines and notions so totally inconsistent with vigorous and distinguishing good sense; sentiments so contrary to humanity and liberality; demeanour so repugnant to frankness, sincerity, and candour, could not be durable among Englishmen. The ferment of passion cooled; the frenzy of boundless innovation at length gave way to sober reason and experience. Men saw that the liberty which they had pursued beyond all useful limits had terminated in slavery; they wished for the re-establishment of a monarchy properly circumscribed; favourable events seconded their desires, and with general acclamation Charles II. was restored to the throne of his ancestors.

During the period between the restoration and the revolution, commerce and navigation rose to a pitch never before known in the annals of England. The two Dutch wars, by disturbing the trade of Holland, promoted the trade of this island; and the peace which prevailed during the rest of Charles's reign, however censurable on political grounds, and however unfavourable in its ultimate effects to the balance of power and independence of Europe, rapidly and powerfully contributed to the opulence of England. Both the fortunes and views of mercantile men were greatly enlarged. There were more merchants on London 'change at the end of this time, worth

[Extension of colonization. Consequences of the arbitrary conduct of Charles.]

ten thousand pounds,* than at the beginning worth one thousand. With riches, ideas of accommodation and ornament diverged, manufactures were also very considerably improved. The general spirit of progressive industry was assisted by favourable incidents; the bigoted and tyrannical impolicy of Louis XIV. revoked the edict of Nantz, and drove from their country great numbers of his most useful subjects. He thereby furnished neighbouring states with arts and manufactures, and was peculiarly beneficial to England. The revenue rose with trade, its various branches were much more accurately regulated, especially the customs,† the species of tax most connected with commerce. The excise, tending so much more effectually to prevent frauds, was improved, the principles of finance began to be understood. Left chiefly to their own industry and skill, the established colonies increased in prosperity, and new settlements were either formed or acquired.

New-York and New-Jersey were ceded by the Dutch; Pennsylvania and Carolina were planted: the first by quakers, who fled from the persecutions to which, by the intolerance of Charles's government, sectaries were exposed; the second, by persons well affected to the king. These carried to their respective settlements their political sentiments, and transmitted them to their posterity. The persecutions also drove other emigrants to those established colonies which coincided in their opinion. Thus, from New-Hampshire to South-Carolina, the American coast was colonized by England. The northern settlements cherished a spirit of republicanism, the southern a spirit of monarchical loyalty. Rapidly prospering under the system of policy that had been embraced, they were adding proportionably to both the export and import trade of the mother country. The shipping of England, in twenty-eight years, was more than doubled;‡ James and Charles both vigorously promoted the increase of a navy, which, though misemployed by the corrupt and pernicious policy of Charles, yet showed itself efficient and fit for defending the country and her allies, whenever the sceptre of England should be placed in hands both able and disposed to wield it for the national good.

Charles's principles and schemes of government were unquestionably inimical to civil and religious liberty; and though the bold and generous spirit of Englishmen prevented his designs from being fully accomplished, yet many of his acts, even in England, were extremely tyrannical. His arbitrary measures would have justified a much more forcible resistance than they met; and were, probably, by the recent experience only of the miseries of civil war, prevented from recoiling on himself. In Scotland, the constant and regular plan, as well as the particular acts of his government, merited and excited abhorrence. His iniquitous conduct, at once unjust and profligate, caused great but only temporary evil, while the remedies which it suggested proved a durable good. His attacks on the liberty of the subject raised bulwarks of defence of the strongest materials, to last many ages after he and his tyrannical efforts had perished for ever. His formation and increase of a standing army gave rise to a law, that a standing army

* See sir Josiah Child's Brief Observations.

† See Wealth of Nations, vol. iii, p. 347.

‡ See Davenant's Discourse on the Public Revenues.

[Whigs. Danger of premature resistance. Greatness of France.]

was illegal, and made the national force dependant on the guardians of national liberty; unjust and unwarrantable imprisonments produced the habeas-corpus act, which completed the security of personal liberty: vigilant patriotism of the legislature abolished military tenures; the prerogatives of purveyance and pre-emption; and the capital punishment of heretics. It established triennial parliaments; and the test and corporation acts; and enacted many other laws which improved the security of liberty and property.

Hostile as was Charles to the freedom and rights of the people; yet in his reign the constitution of England, in its progressive state, arrived at mature vigour; the true balance between privilege and prerogative was established. By the law, now ascertained and fixed, the people had nearly as large a portion of liberty as was necessary to their security and happiness;* though fresh restrictions were still wanting to ensure its operation, without interruption from the pretended prerogatives of arbitrary princes. The tyrannical proceedings of Charles formed the opponents of his pretensions into a firm, well compacted, and powerful body. By promulgating the doctrines of passive obedience, so contrary to the rights and liberties of Englishmen, to common sense and to common feeling, the king, his ministers, and churchmen, united the supporters of opposite sentiments, under the appellation of whigs; a name important and venerable, while it signifies champions of constitutional freedom, without extending to invaders of no less constitutional prerogatives of the crown. Carrying their opposition to the measures and designs of Charles farther than prudence admitted, the friends of freedom, in their discomfiture, near the close of the reign, and the death of magnanimous patriots on the scaffold, left to future votaries of liberty a warning lesson of the danger of premature resistance even in the best cause. The same principles which influenced the internal government of Charles directed his foreign politics.

Louis XIV. was absolute and unlimited sovereign of the extensive, well compacted, and fertile empire of France, peopled with inhabitants eminently ingenious, industrious, and energetic. Ardent, violent, and excessive in every pursuit, his subjects were devoted to the will of their prince, and to the promotion of his glory. The downfall of the Spanish monarchy, and the triumphs of the French arms, so gratifying to the national pride, invigorated the military spirit of Frenchmen. Zealous attachment to their young monarch, and the desire of extending his greatness, stimulated and encouraged their farther efforts. The resources of the country were extensive and increasing; the armies were numerous, well disciplined, and commanded by consummate generals. The officers, in all the various ranks and gradations, were prepared for their profession by regular and systematic tuition, and thoroughly fitted for executing the plans of their commanders, by the skilful and masterly performance of every subordinate duty. Gay and dissipated in private life, they were in public service strict, vigilant, and efficient. Military stores abounded, and nothing was wanting to render the land force of France organized and formidable. The rising spirit of navigation and trade; the maritime

* See Blackstone's last chapter.

[Situation of England relatively to the continent Policy of Charles. Manners.]

opportunities; the example of their neighbours, so successful in acquiring opulence and strengthening security; stimulated France to naval effort. The extension of commerce and navy became grand objects of French policy, and made considerable advances. So situated in the youthful vigour of his life, enterprising, both ambitious and vain, desirous of power for ostentatious display as well as solid possession, Louis had strong incitements to attack and disturb his neighbours. The enfeebled and exhausted princes of Austria were little able to oppose this potent monarch. The whole continent was incapable of preserving the balance of power; England only could hold the scale.

Skilful industry, possessing plenty of materials, desires peace: the result of industry, skill, and materials, is property. War may be necessary for security; but on any other ground, must, to a commercial nation, be unwise. As prospective policy guards against circuitous, as well as direct aggression, it becomes the interest of an industrious and mercantile community to watch the progress of ambitious neighbours. Britain, flourishing and opulent, had no inducement to offensive war, since continental acquisition could add nothing to her commerce and riches; but had frequently strong motives to resist the offensive wars of her neighbours, to preserve the balance of power, which, if overturned, would endanger herself. The aggressive character of France, co-operating with her own circumstances and situation, necessarily imposed upon Britain, her most potent and efficient neighbour, the contrary character, of being for her own ultimate security the protector of continental independence. Such has been the relation in which from the reigns of Charles and of Louis, the British and French empires have stood to each other, and to the rest of Europe. The arbitrary designs and profligate views of Charles united in driving him to the treacherous and fatal policy of promoting, instead of opposing, the excessive power and boundless ambition of France. Through Louis, he hoped to establish in England his favourite despotism and policy, the engine of civil slavery. From Louis he received the means of wallowing in debauchery: a king of England betrayed his country for bribes from the king of France, to be squandered on prostitutes, and worthless minions! From a combination of motives, unconstitutional and profligate, Charles II. abandoned his duty to these realms, joined with their most dangerous enemy, attacked our protestant ally, and powerfully assisted in raising France to such a pitch of dangerous greatness.

Avoiding the gloomy austerity of the puritans, and influenced by the example of the king and court, English manners now ran into the opposite extreme of licentiousness and profligacy. Many ingenious and able men fell into infidelity, immorality, and impiety, and infected the literature of the times. A relish for grossness and indecency mingled itself with composition the most witty, humorous, and impressive, especially dramatic productions. This alloy to very great literary excellence long continued, until progressive refinement and delicacy removed the abuse. Writers in the lighter kind of compositions, who designed to exhibit the manners of the times, and represent them truly, drew them much more minutely than was necessary; and more favourably than they deserved. One writer, however,

[Literature. James I. Folly of his conduct. Revolution.]

though often chargeable with the indelicacy of the times, often hasty and incorrect, remains the third of English poets, and almost the first of English critics. In higher departments of intellectual effort, depending on general views of ethics and divinity, on the investigation and comprehension of physical phenomena and their laws, English genius rose to great and beneficial exertions; talents and erudition supported natural theology, christianity, and the protestant faith; and from these, inculcated religious and moral duty.* In the more profound and abstruse studies of mathematics and natural philosophy, several sages attained very high eminence. One reaching the zenith of scientific discovery, invention, and deduction, equalled the very deepest and wisest philosophers of all ages or countries.

James II. much inferior to his brother in talents, a zealous, ardent, and priest-ridden bigot, considered the supreme good of mankind to be a belief in the Romish faith. Imperious, tyrannical, and cruel, contrary to the most obvious observation of his own early and recent experience, this prince conceived that Englishmen would yield to any mandate which he, in the insolence of lawless sway, should dare to offer. Arbitrary power was principally desired by this infatuated and contemptible zealot, to make converts in theology. Neither, like his brother, treacherous or corrupt, though not without a sense of the national honour, nor a jealousy of the power of France, yet he sacrificed all considerations to his darling popery. His priests and his rituals, his masses and his mummeries, he preferred to the welfare of his people, and the security of his throne. Uniting against heretics, churchmen, parties, and classes most zealous for monarchy, as well as whigs and votaries of liberty; his conduct was more fortunate for the country, than if less completely odious: it facilitated the success of our glorious deliverer. The very madness of this poor infatuated zealot was extremely beneficial to his country, by withdrawing from him all confidence and support, and effecting a bloodless revolution, in driving him from a throne, which he was totally unqualified to fill. His conduct brought the question between liberty and prerogative to a crisis; it showed English kings, that by abusing, for arbitrary and iniquitous purposes, powers vested in them by the constitution to promote the public good, they soon should have no prerogative to exercise.

Necessity compelled a deviation from the rules of hereditary succession to the throne of England; the same necessity that dictated the exception, defined its bounds. The disqualification of James had arisen from his arbitrary principles and conduct, chiefly originating in popish doctrines, and exercised to promote popish notions and government. The next protestant successors, not only presumed, but known to be the enemies of civil and ecclesiastical tyranny, were substituted, on their agreeing to conditions necessary for the security of liberty and religion.

The revolution having been thus produced, and the terms prescribed on which the new sovereign was to reign, foreign politics became the most urgent consideration. The overgrown power of Louis rendered a confederation of other states necessary for their joint and se-

* Barrow, Tillotson, and other eminent clergymen.

[William III. French navy crushed at La Hogue. Continental policy.]

parate security. Having heroically defended and protected his country from the unprovoked invasion and usurping ambition of Louis, William bent the principal force of his genius to the repression of France. Much less efficacious in power, and less splendid in character, than the monarch of Paris, the stadtholder of the Hague had a more solid, forcible, and inventive genius, creating and acquiring resources that rendered him ultimately equal to his foe. By delivering his own country from impending thralldom to France, William was enabled afterwards to effect the delivery of England. His successful accomplishment of this momentous object, produced the adoption by England of that system of foreign policy which the state of Europe required. Blameable as were Charles and James in so many parts of their administration, yet they had both applied with great vigour and effect to the increase of the navy, and left to a successor, seeking the real interest of his kingdom, a formidable engine to be employed against the friend and ally of their mischievous counsels. Louis had acquired a considerable naval force, and was not without the hopes that France would obtain by sea the same supremacy which she had established by land. Some partial successes in the beginning of the war against England, encouraged this expectation. But at length, exerting the full force of her fleet, England, at La Hogue, crushed the navy of France; and again taught her enemies that she was still to be mistress of the ocean. During the rest of the war, though detached ships might be troublesome and vexatious, no French fleet was powerful or formidable. The army which Charles and James had levied and maintained for wicked ends, under the guidance of William, was conducive to salutary purposes. Inspired by the national spirit which supported the protestant asserters of their rights and liberty against a popish tyrant, they performed feats of magnanimous valour* and discomfited all the invading projects of the deposed tyrant. They could not prevent him from perpetrating horrid cruelties, but they hindered his blood-thirsty murders from promoting his permanent interest. They at length manifested to the world, that no person proscribed by the choice of Englishmen, could attain dominion over them by force. They also showed to their French invaders, that an attempt to subjugate any part of this island by a foreign power, must ultimately recoil on the invaders. On the continent, the weakness and distractions of the allies, and the immense land force of the enemy, prevented the confederates from obtaining complete success; but the efforts of William were strenuous and important. Without gaining splendid victory, he prevented consummate generals, numerous and disciplined veterans of the enemy, from obtaining any signal or material advantage. Jarring parties, and treacherous conspiracies, frequently disturbed the internal tranquillity of William's reign; but the greater number of his people, awake to the national honour and interest, desired to prosecute a war with vigour which was necessary to repress the ambition of France.

The exertions of the nation and parliament to humble the foe of British independence exhibited that combined magnanimity and wis-

* See defence of Londonderry, in Smollet's continuation of Hume, vol. i. ch. 1. and the whole narrative of the war in Ireland.

[England the most efficient foe of French encroachment. Policy of France.]

dom, which bears great inconveniences, in order to repel much greater evils. They induced Louis to listen to much more reasonable terms of negotiation, than in the days of British supineness he had been accustomed to dictate, and showed the direct tendency of warlike strength and effort to produce peace to an intrepid and mighty people. In the detail of battles, Louis was the conqueror; yet, in the result of success, prosperity, and power, the ambitious and imperious monarch of France found, at the treaty of Rhyswick, his dictatorial command limited and circumscribed. He there was taught that the most formidable foe of Gallic encroachment is England. Deprived by a contest with Britain of that naval power which it had been one of the chief objects of his long reign to raise and extend, France might have learned, that a nation which seeks maritime aggrandizement by warring against a nation much more powerful at sea than herself, only labours to defeat her own purpose. From his continental successes, and his maritime disasters, Louis might have learned, that while she directed her principal attention to armies, France might gratify her unbounded ambition; but that her marine exertions to cope with England brought a reduction of her strength.

The policy of France under her vain-glorious despot, disturbing her neighbours, unjust in principle, and barbarous in operation, was in its events ruinous to the country which that despot governed. Fitted, from climate, soil, situation, and the genius of her people, to acquire, enjoy, and preserve riches, and all the comforts of life; she, under the splendid but destructive domination of Louis, experienced poverty and misery. The wars occupied numbers of the hands which the welfare of the people required to have been employed in cultivating the ground. The imports of corn, wanted to supply the deficiencies, were intercepted by the naval armaments of her overpowering enemy. Multitudes perished by famine. The pompous pageantry of triumphant rejoicing for useless victory could not prevent the melancholy spectacles of wretches starving with hunger. The impious strains of pretended gratitude, attributing to the divinity the successes of unwise injustice, were followed by the groans of subjects dying in the streets, because the infatuated ambition of their prince preferred ruinous wars to beneficial peace. These, together with the depopulation of his kingdom by narrow bigotry, were among the glories of Louis's aggressive policy. By his external politics, he reduced the internal prosperity, which the physical and moral resources of his country, the talents and skill of his ministers had so rapidly advanced. The commercial and maritime improvements, rising under the superintending wisdom of Colbert in their salutary tendency to the happiness of the people, received effectual checks from Louis himself. This view of the consequences of his wars might have taught that king, that his projects led only to splendid misery. His apparent moderation at Rhyswick afforded some grounds for expecting, that, for the future, he would pursue a system more wise and magnanimous, and would sacrifice theinsel of false glory to the real benefit of his country. But those who fancied that the experienced errors of past counsels and conduct would produce a change of object and principle, gave him credit for a wisdom and greatness of mind which he did not possess. His object continued

[Spain. Finance. Establishment of the bank. Funding system.]

the same, he only varied the means : by a negotiation, and a dissolution of the defensive confederacy, he sought that rapacious encroachment, which he found to be no longer attainable by force. The peace of Rhyswick was intended to facilitate the accession of a Bourbon prince to the throne of Spain. Crafty in design, and dextrous in address, amusing the allies by partition treaties, Louis over-reached the sounder and more vigorous understanding of William, and raising his grandson to be monarch of Spain, rendered a kingdom, so long the rival, at length the appendage of France. This new act of ambition, so dangerous to the independence of Europe, produced a new confederacy to avert the danger by removing its cause.

The overgrown dominion of France demanded an expense unknown in the history of our wars, and very heavily felt by the nation. To lessen the immediate burthens of the people, a scheme was proposed, and adopted, for answering a great part of the exigencies of war, by anticipating the products of peace and prosperity. To supply the deficiencies of present income, sums were to be borrowed, on the probable expectation that the finances would increase in tranquillity and flourishing commerce, and afford a surplus beyond the expenditure. The debts contracted were to be guaranteed by the public faith, and to be discharged from the public savings : hence first arose, in England, the funding system. At its outset, the national debt was incurred under an idea of certain and even speedy liquidation. The security was chiefly an assignment of specific taxes, which was supposed, by an hypothetical calculation, sufficient to pay principal and interest in a few years. A national bank was established, for extending the credit and security of government, and for facilitating commercial intercourse and exchange. A mercantile joint stock company was, with that view, incorporated, under the name of the Bank of England. This body, composed in 1694, advanced the sum of twelve hundred thousand pounds, at eight per cent. constituting their first capital, and repayable at the option of government in 1705 ; but the debts incurred both to that corporation and other bodies and individuals, greatly increasing during the war, a system of perpetual funding was deemed expedient. In 1697, the debts of Great Britain, funded and unfunded, amounted to 21,515,742*l.* 13*s.* 8*d.* incumbering the productive industry of the country with an annual burthen of nearly one million seven hundred thousand pounds for interest, at the rate of eight per cent. then paid by government.

To this system of supplying national exigencies, several strong objections were made. It was alleged, that the incumbrance would be an oppressive weight upon productive industry ; that it was a temporary prop to national credit, which ought to be supported on the solid basis of economy ; that neither economy nor prudence justified the contraction of certain and great debts, upon uncertain and contingent means of repayment ; that by this mode, the state resembled an improvident spendthrift, who, from his prodigality, being unable to wait for the regular payment of his revenue, and exceeding in expenditure the amount of his income, was obliged to borrow on usurious terms, and thus to impair his fortune. Enabled to borrow upon extravagant interest, ministers and princes would have internally the means of corruption, and obtain by influence what they could not enforce by

[Arguments for and against the funding system.]

power. The restriction imposed upon kingly prerogative would be really unavailing. The king might make wars, not conducive to the defence or security of his people, and therefore injurious. The treasury, from borrowed money, affording funds for bribery, might, in the hands of an artful and corrupt minister, win a majority in parliament to support pernicious measures of the crown. The facility of raising money would incline and encourage the executive government to promote wars, and other expensive and useless undertakings. All the funds for paying the national debt being transferable, and fluctuating in value, would introduce a system of stock-jobbing, and withdraw capitals from agriculture, manufacture, and commerce, to be employed in speculations in the public funds. Instead of seeking riches, as traders, by the progressive efforts of industry and skill, many would become money-brokers and gamblers. Individuals, without ability, beneficial enterprise, and effort, would accumulate fortunes, from the exorbitant profits allowed by government; and the public would be impoverished in the same proportion. A system of borrowing unnecessarily, like every other pecuniary profusion, would increase by indulgence; the debt would not be temporary as its authors asserted, but permanent and progressive, until it ended in bankruptcy. Such were the principal disadvantages which the adversaries of the funding system anticipated from its adoption.*

Its supporters alleged, that the loans were not upon the principles of a spendthrift, squandering without any prospect of return; but in the true spirit of enlightened merchants, diminishing the pressure of payments necessarily made for the attainment of beneficial objects. As a merchant would, without hesitation, borrow money at a great interest, by which he had a moral certainty of either preventing a greater loss, or acquiring a greater gain; government borrowed, for the defence of the country against the enemies of the constitution, and for the security of our national independence against Gallic ambition. Agreeably to the soundest principles of mercantile policy, the public, when straitened for ready money, had incurred future and distant responsibilities, at seasons of more convenient liquidation. The efforts made through the loans, and which but for them would have been impracticable, would extend the greatness, prosperity, and opulence of the country. The establishment of this system, including the national bank, would revive and confirm public credit, and extend circulation. Increasing currency would, by competition, lower interest, enhance the value of land, promote the spirit of manufactures and commerce, facilitate the annual supplies, and augment the means of private wealth and public revenue. The scheme would attach the national creditors to the recent establishment, from which the security of their loans was derived; and find, in the private interests of monied capitalists, a strong bulwark against the house of Stuart; commercial men, a class of subjects already numerous and important, and zealous supporters of a free government, would be firm friends to the revolution.

* See Smollet's History of William, *passim*. From various political writings as well as the histories of the times, this was generally the opinion of the tories and the landed interest, as the contrary was the opinion of the whigs and monied interest. Enmity to the funding system, though not necessarily connected with tory principles, was, from extraneous circumstances, a mark of toryism.

[Impartial view. Progress of commerce during this reign.]

As the funded system was an anticipating tax on future and contingent, though probable industry, its efficiency towards the proposed discharge of debt, was necessarily to depend upon the amount of that industry, and consequently on the existence or continuance of circumstances favourable to its exertions. It was a burthen upon future effort, the disadvantages of which were immediately felt, were pecuniary, and could be instantly appreciated by the most ordinary capacity. The advantages, commercial and political, could not be so obvious; and to be understood, required extensive knowledge and enlarged comprehension; and though understood, to be relished required a wisdom and firmness which would encounter a smaller but present and certain inconvenience, to attain greater but more distant and eventual benefit. The new taxes imposed for liquidating the debt, were immediate deductions from either the profits or enjoyments of the payer. If the system was necessary, justice demanded that it should be adopted no farther than the necessity required; and that money borrowed on the national faith, to be paid from the national industry, should be employed for the national security, honour, and advantage. During the peace, the debt contracted by government was, in four years, reduced to sixteen millions, the reduction being upwards of five millions.*

The wars in which William was engaged, considerably distressed mercantile adventurers, by the capture of their ships. Unable, after the battle of La Hogue, to meet the English navy, France directed her chief maritime attention to the annoyance of our commerce. These depredations, producing individual loss, and consequently diminution of public revenue, caused great clamours against government; and the disaffected party represented our trade as having greatly decayed in the time of William. An impartial examination of commercial history leads to an opposite conclusion. Louis's attempts to destroy the commerce of England, like those against her navy, recoiled on himself. Precluded, during hostilities, from traffic with France, the English began to seek from their own industry manufactures which before they had imported from that country. Cut off from traffic with her southern neighbours, she encouraged and stimulated the manufacturing skill of the protestant refugees, whom the tolerating spirit of William protected from the persecution of Louis. This liberal and enlightened policy, cherishing such useful preceptors, tended eventually to render the scholars superior to their masters. Affording security to artizans, the free constitution of England applied the strongest motives to the exertion of industry. France lost her exports of linen, by which before England had been chiefly supplied; various articles of hardware, her silk manufactures, and many other commodities, that these realms, taught to prepare for themselves, were soon able to furnish for other nations. Though not without a share in the calamities of war, the American colonies continued rapidly progressive in prosperity. The West Indies were now cultivated in the manner which rendered them most eminently lucrative. Sugar occupied the chief care of the planters, though,

* Two millions of this sum were advanced by the new East India company, constituted in 1693. See Anderson's History of Commerce, vol. ii. p. 597.

[Recoinage favourable to trade. Partiality of the king to his native country.]

without excluding in the appropriate soils the cultivation of other productions. Barbadoes and Jamaica, especially, had obtained very great population and prosperity at this period. The African and Turkish trade was considerably extended; the northern was risen in a still greater proportion, as William, from inclination, vicinity, and command of the north seas,* was closely connected with the northern powers. With Spain and Portugal, from political as well as commercial relations, England enjoyed the principal share of commerce. Even in the East Indies, notwithstanding the misconduct of the first company, and its contest with its competitor, the mercantile spirit of England overcame the disadvantages of a corporate monopoly. The renovated and improved system of polity which the revolution confirmed, secured property, and its general operation promoted the spirit of commerce. The acts, both for extending national and mercantile credit, stimulated commercial adventure and enterprise, by facility of accommodation, increase of currency, and an enlargement of that confidence on which mercantile transactions principally rest. The subsequent means for supporting the bank also tended to the unprecedented extension of trade. Very favourable to the promotion of the same object, was the principle of re-coinage, adopted by Montague, in the depreciated state of the existing coin. By subjecting the public, and not individual holders of current coins, to the loss accruing from the diminished weight he confirmed national credit. The re-coinage of silver, on terms so liberal and wise, was one of the most beneficial measures by which commerce was advanced in William's reign.† In the four peaceful years of William's reign, English commerce very far surpassed any former efforts and success.

Conducive as the counsels and acts of this illustrious prince were to the prosperity of England, there were reasons, not destitute of plausibility, for imputing to him partiality to his native country, whenever her interests and those of his kingdoms came into competition. The Scottish projects of establishing a colony on the isthmus of Darien, in order to trade with the South Sea from its western to its eastern boundaries, having been first countenanced and afterwards opposed by the king, his disapprobation of the scheme was imputed to the jealousy of the Dutch. In his continental politics, he was represented by the disaffected in England as mindful chiefly of the interests of the states-general. According to detractors, English blood

* See Anderson's History of Commerce, vol. ii.

† The following remark by Mr. Anderson, after his account of the sum subscribed by the second East India company, strongly illustrates both the increase and actual state of commerce at the conclusion of William's war. "After so long, and such an expensive war, which was now but just ended; wherein, also, there had been very great losses, by captures of so many of our rich merchant ships, it gave foreign nations a high idea of the wealth and grandeur of England, to see two millions sterling money subscribed for in three days' time, and had the books been kept open longer, there were persons ready to have subscribed as much more; for although, higher proofs have since appeared of the great riches of the nation, because our wealth is visibly and much increased since that time, yet till then there had never been so illustrious an instance of England's opulence. This, however, was undoubtedly owing, in a great measure, to the illegal establishment of our free constitution, by the accession of king William and queen Mary to the throne; by which a firm confidence in the public faith was established on a solid basis."

[Polity of England as fixed by the revolution. Source of national prosperity.]

and treasure were sacrificed for an ideal balance of power, not necessary for the security of these islands. English interference in continental politics might be useful to the Dutch, but was hurtful to this country. Bending our chief efforts to our navy, we, surrounded by the ocean, could defend ourselves against all foreign attempts, and therefore ought not to waste our strength in foreign disputes. The burthen and expense of continental war were owing either to the impolicy or injurious designs of William. Such were the views of the Tories; who, because unfavourable to William individually and his schemes, became inimical to the interference of Britain as a principal party in the contests of the continent. The Whigs, friendly to William, and hostile to Louis, whom they deemed the great protector and abettor of arbitrary power, ardently promoted the most active efforts of Great Britain against France. These distinctive and opposite plans of policy respecting the continent, commencing at the end of the seventeenth century, lasted through the eighteenth. Both parties have professed to seek security. The one has deemed naval effort sufficient for guarding the British isles against every danger; the other, either more comprehensive or more fanciful, has extended its vigilance against contingent as well as impending danger; and, for that purpose, has promoted powerful continental efforts, as the wise policy of Britain.

The constitution of England, having been ascertained at the commencement of William's reign, assumed nearly the same appearance which it has since worn. The doctrine of resistance to an executive magistrate, violating our laws and constitution, was confirmed and exemplified in awful practice. The laws having been before defined with accurate precision, the power of dispensing with them was forever terminated. Prerogative was completely circumscribed, that no king could of his own will act contrary to the interests and liberties of his subjects. From that time, if the councils or measures of the sovereign were either arbitrary, or injurious to his people, they must be so through the neglect of the people themselves, or their chosen representatives in parliament; and not from any power lodged in the king. If the influence of the crown and its ministers has ever produced noxious measures since the revolution, the people must blame themselves for appointing delegates, either not qualified, or not disposed to promote the welfare of their country. The people and parliament may, either immediately or speedily, control and prevent every act of the crown which they do not approve. The liberty, property, and life of a Briton cannot be invaded but by his own act, either through himself or his representatives. If, therefore, since the revolution, liberty, property, or life, has in any one instance, been unjustly attacked, the injustice is chargeable to the whole body of the people, and not to the existing polity. Increased in prosperity, the means of subsistence, accommodation, and security; in riches and power; in invention, sagacity, enterprise; in aggregate industry and skill; in physical resources, and the characters of her inhabitants; Britain brings undoubted evidence to show, that a system producing such a multiplicity of advantages must be wise and good.

The same modified principle of hereditary succession, which had dictated the substitution of William and Mary for the lineal monarch,

[Parties in England. Whigs, Tories, and Jacobites.]

on the death of the princess Anne's son, suggested the act for setting the crown on the next protestant heir. Princess Sophia, grand-daughter of James I., was his nearest descendant, not disqualified for the throne by the declared resolution and act of the English lawgivers. The act of settlement was a corollary from the act of the convention parliament, which had settled the crown in 1689. The political doctrine established in both, was simple and explicit : in the mixed monarchy and free government of England, an hereditary line of princes is the most expedient, and conducive to the tranquillity and welfare of the people. But if the lineal heir, or even possessor, be under disqualifications incompatible with the good of the nation, the next in the line, not disqualified, shall succeed. These were the grounds on which Anne ascended the throne, to the exclusion of her brother, the son and representative of king James.

From the revolution, and through the reign of William, the political parties were, in principles and objects, three. The first, the Whigs, who supported the new establishment from the love of liberty, as well as enmity to popery and French influence. The whigs were inimical to the extensive power of the clergy, as incompatible with the freedom which they adored. Their doctrines, civil and ecclesiastical, were extremely disagreeable to those who abetted passive obedience, either to the monarch and his servants, or the church, its bishops, and its convocations. In theology, as well as politics, the whigs estimated the importance of doctrines, by their tendency and effects upon civil society, and little regarded the contentions of metaphysical divinity. Friendly to toleration, they reckoned the criterion of its extent and bounds, political expediency; and proposed, that all sects should be unmolested, who did not disturb the public tranquillity, or the constitutional rights of English subjects. They patronized and encouraged the protestant dissenters, a very powerful body, and firm friends to the revolution. On the side of the whigs, many votaries of the church of England were ranged; these were persons who venerated the established church, as the promoter of true christian piety and morality;* but who, not desirous of exalting either kingly or priestly power beyond constitutional bounds, were denominated the low church.

The second party consisted of Tories, votaries of passive obedience, and staunch supporters of the church. These, being inimical to popery, thought the revolution necessary for the preservation of the protestant religion, and considered the popery of James and his son as the sole reason for excluding them from the throne. The tories reproated the political doctrines of the whigs, and the theological opinions of the dissenters; and exalting the pretensions of the priesthood, thereby acquired the denomination of high church. According to these, profaneness and impiety were the distinguishing characteristics of William's reign, and were bringing the nation fast to destruction.†

The third party was the Jacobites; who, though tories in many of their principles and sentiments, exceeded them in the practical adop-

* To this class of whigs, belonged Burnet, Tillotson, Hoadley, and Addison.

† See Pope's Essay on Criticism.

[All concur to support queen Anne. Marlborough. Confederacy against France.]

tion of passive obedience, and maintained the iniquity of resistance to the hereditary prince, whatever his conduct might be, and sought the restoration of James to the throne. The two former parties had been alternately opponents to king William; but the whigs had most frequently supported his political measures. The jacobites, from their principles and objects, had been uniformly inimical to our deliverer, but varied their mode of hostility according to circumstances. Sometimes they tried rebellion, sometimes conspiracies; but finding their treasonable efforts unsuccessful, during a great part of his reign, they confined their attempts to the diffusion of discontent.

Different as the three parties were, and in many respects opposite, yet they concurred in supporting queen Anne. The church party knew that her majesty was a sincere and zealous member of the church of England, and trusted that she would support the ecclesiastical establishment and doctrines; they expected, that, through her protecting influence, the high church would triumph over sectaries, schismatics, heretics, presbyterians and whigs, over low churchmen and lukewarm friends of the hierarchy. The jacobites, conceiving her majesty attached to the hereditary line, hoped that, having no issue alive, she would attempt and affect the restoration of the lineal heir. Aware that the queen held her throne upon their principles, the whigs doubted not that, from prudence and self-interest, she would rest chiefly for support on the most strenuous adversaries to the claim of the pretender. They knew that Anne, a personage of very moderate intellects, was entirely governed by the countess of Marlborough, and through her, by the consummate talents of the earl; and that the whig plans of policy were the most consonant to the interests and views of this celebrated hero. Having succeeded to the crown with the favour of all the jarring parties, Anne, on her first appearance in parliament, declaring her sincere attachment to the church, gratified the Tories; and testifying her resolution to maintain the laws and liberties of her country and the protestant succession, and her determination to adhere to the counsels and engagements of William, satisfied the whigs. England, again the protector of European independence, and the provident guardian of her own security, went to war with France, the encroaching disturber of Europe. The succession war originated in the same principles as the former confederacy of William. Agreeing in the necessity of hostilely opposing France, the Tories wished Britain to act only as an auxiliary; but the whigs, if not more patriotic in intention, at least more comprehensive in view, saw that partial and secondary efforts from Britain would not effectually answer the purpose of her interferences: a mere maritime and defensive war would be only a half measure of short-sighted and inefficient policy. The whigs succeeded in procuring the adoption of their plan to be carried into execution, under a renowned general, now at the head of their party. The powerful efforts of the free states imparted to their allies a portion of their spirit, as well as a considerable share of the manifold resources which liberty formed and nourished. The discomfiture and destruction of his bravest troops whenever they faced an Eugene or a Marlborough; Turin, Ramillies, and Blenheim; the annihilation of his navy, and the ruin of his commerce, under the resistless navy of England; the impoverished state of his finances, and

[Great exertions of France. Impolitic rigour of the allies.]

the bitter miseries of his subjects; afforded to the aged violator of justice an awful lesson, that the wise policy of France, fertile, strong, internally secure, improved and improveable, is not, by disturbing her neighbours, to distress and impoverish herself; but by peace, and the arts which peace promotes among so ingenious a people, to cultivate and extend her immense resources for her own comfort and happiness. What peace had done for her prosperity, war had as uniformly undone. The combination begun, and long employed for maintaining the balance of power, and ensuring future exemption from disturbance, had completely accomplished its object. But the confederates, in the exultation of victory, forgot the actual and the only wise purpose of the war. Not contented with the king's dereliction of Spain, they sought the subjugation and dismemberment of France itself; disdained the very ample and momentous concessions offered by Louis, under the dejection of continued defeat; and drove him, through indignation and despair, to efforts which in any other circumstances he would have never attempted. His people, enraged at the haughty and unrelenting severity of the confederates, and interested for the glory of their monarch and the defence of their country, made exertions that amazed both their enemies and themselves. The impolitic refusal of victors to grant favourable terms to foes defeated but not subdued, inspirited the vanquished, and enabled them to make head against the combination, until the jealousies incidental to such alliances, and other favourable circumstances, produced its dissolution. The confederates learned, when it was too late, that having in decisive victory the means of concluding honourable and advantageous peace, which would have fully effected the wise and meritorious purposes of the war, they ought to have embraced the propitious moment. Intestine divisions had not then withdrawn the most efficient member of the alliance. The intriguing artifices of an inferior court servant,* the bigoted declamation of a hot-headed zealot,† had not displaced the first general of his time, or detached England from a confederacy for preserving the balance of power. If they had subdued Louis as completely, as by continuing the war they proposed, Britain and Holland, in rendering Austria predominant, would have totally overturned the balance which they had been fighting to establish.‡ The objections of the confederates, from a professed doubt of the sincerity of the French sovereign, were by no means consistent with the sagacity of that consummate politician, who guided the counsels as well as led the arms of the allies.§ The penetration of Marlborough might have seen the probability of the sincerity of Louis, in his situation and conduct. An interest, almost amounting to necessity, rendered peace, upon humiliating terms, desirable, in the ruinous and miserable state of the French kingdom. The party which, in England, was supreme in power, could have dictated a peace that would have fully separated Spain from France; repressed Bourbon ambition; confirmed the independence of Europe, the protestant succes-

* Mrs. Marsham.

† Sacheverel.

‡ See Somerville's History of queen Anne, *passim*. Smollet's History, *passim*.

§ See Dr. Somerville's account of the negotiations at the Hague in 1709; and at Gertruydenburg, in 1710. Cunningham's History; also the Memoirs of Torcy, and the several negotiators.

[Parties become more determinate. Fluctuations of opinion.]

sion, and the security of Britain ; and obtained every national object for embarking in the confederacy. If they desired more, they desired too much. Prolongation of the war, therefore, was unnecessary, and consequently unwise and hurtful. In the changes of political rulers, extravagant concessions completed the evils of impolitic rigour. The precipitate advances of the tories yielded to Louis infinitely more, than, when offered, the repulsive haughtiness of the whigs had refused. The terms were far from corresponding with the objects for which the war had been undertaken ; and very unequal to the success with which it had been attended, and the force which the allies still possessed for its farther prosecution. But if the whigs most justly and severely censured the peace of Utrecht, impartial examiners must admit, that its evils might have been prevented at the Hague, or Gertruydenburg. Oxford and Bolingbroke could not have concluded an inadequate peace, unless Marlborough had three years before rejected conditions, not only adequate, but highly honourable and advantageous for Britain and her allies.

The parties from which sprung this great diversity in plans and measures of foreign politics, in their long and violent contentions, became more determinate in their principles, more definite in their character, more uniform in their views, and more methodical in their plans, than during the preceding reign. In the first years of Anne, the tories, although much more agreeable to the real inclinations of the queen, were apparently superior in the house of commons and nation. But the use which they made of these advantages, manifested no great depth of policy, and tended little to secure the continuance of their power. The principal object of the tory majority in the first parliament of queen Anne, was to promote high church doctrines, and to restrict the dissenters. To effect their purpose, a cry was raised *that the church was in danger.*

The prudence and expediency of exciting an alarm, in order to secure political influence, depends, in a free country, on the exact state of popular opinion. At the end of William's reign, when discontent had been so studiously spread against the king, and all those whom he favoured, many conscientious members of the church really believed that conspiracies were forming by republicans and schismatics, to overthrow the ecclesiastical establishment. To its well meaning votaries the church was then the chief subject of anxiety and alarm. But though they were churchmen, they were Englishmen and protestants ; and if they hated presbyterians much, they hated Frenchmen and popery more. The war breaking out, occupied their attention, and engaged their passions. The grand and comprehensive scheme of operations promoted by the whigs, proved successful. If they regarded the tories as the protectors of the church, they considered the whigs as the vanquishers of our most inveterate enemies. Their fears for the church were forgotten in the triumphant joy for the glory of their country. Dissenters were not the only enemies of the church. Conspiracies in favour of the pretender revived their fears of popery ; and turned their favourable attention to those whom they considered as the champions of the protestant succession. The house of lords, averse to the bigotry and violence by which the commons were actuated, strenuously opposed their bill against occasional

[Whigs a compact, firm and powerful body. Whig literature. Locke.]

conformity, and other measures of impassioned persecution, tending to oppress the dissenters. Defeating these illiberal propositions, they exhibited that moderation which so peculiarly becomes the intermediate body, that the constitution intends to hold the balance between popular intemperance and monarchical encroachment, and afforded a striking and salutary instance of the wisdom and utility of the controls established by the British constitution. From these causes, the tide of popular opinion began to flow for the whigs. With a support so very momentous to a political party, other circumstances co-operated: the whig system of continental policy rendered our allies peculiarly friendly to that party, because, urging the most extensive and vigorous efforts: they were closely connected with the monied interest, that could and did contribute most powerfully to the immense pecuniary exertions requisite in the present scheme of war. If inclination, therefore, attached the queen to the tories, policy impelled her to support and employ the whigs. The interest and ambition of Marlborough directed him to join that party, as his transcendent abilities placed him at the head of any set of men, with whom he united. His duchess, by her uncontrolled power over the queen, strongly assisted in rendering her majesty (though in her heart a zealous tory) in her conduct a most active and effectual instrument under the direction of the whigs. Though there were among the tories men of considerable abilities, yet in the aggregate of talents, the whigs were greatly superior. The men of the highest estimation in church,* state,† and literature,‡ were of their side: not only favourable circumstances, but continuance in office, mutual intercourse, and coincidence of views and interests, rendered the whigs a closely compacted body, capable of acting very powerfully in concert. Their principles of conduct and bond of union, were such, as they durst openly avow; a firm attachment to liberty, to the British constitution as recently ascertained and established, and to the protestant succession as preserving and securing our rights and polity. Hence they were eager promoters of every scheme that tended to ensure the settlement of the crown, and closely connected themselves with the family of Hanover; which, from their principles, protestations, and conduct, regarded this body as its most assured friends, and indeed the bulwark of the expected accession.

The able and enlightened politicians of that party strenuously promoted literary effort: some of them were themselves men of taste, erudition and philosophy: those who were not scholars, possessing vigorous understandings, knowing mankind, and the state of society in England, liberally and wisely patronized learning. Many works were published in favour of general freedom, and particularly the whig acceptance of freedom, by the disciples of the celebrated Locke. Intending the greatest perfection of polity, and the highest happiness of mankind, but accustomed to metaphysical disquisition in speculating upon government, this renowned philosopher rather contemplates his own abstractions, than considers man as he is found by observation and experience. Taking their tone from this extraordi-

* Atterbury was not yet known.

† Harley, Harcourt, and St. John, had not joined the tories.

‡ Swift was connected with Addison, Halifax, and other illustrious whigs. Pope was not yet known.

[Triumph of the tories and church party.]

nary man, other whig writers on political subjects, recurring to his metaphysical principles, drew from them subtile inferences, leading, if admitted, to republicanism, democracy, and even to equality of rank and property.* This was also the kind of doctrine often advanced in the senate, where there was a great predilection for abstract reasoning on politics. Neither speakers nor writers appeared aware of the consequences of such theories, if practically adopted; and though it was very evident they were far from desiring to carry them literally into execution, they however afforded a handle to their opponents, to charge them with an inclination to overturn the church and monarchy. The tories represented their adversaries as republicans, and endeavoured to impress the queen with the same idea, and to revive among the people an alarm that the church was in danger. Established with the people by a series of victory and glory, with the queen by the applause of the country, the splendour and success of their achievements, and the influence of the Marlborough family, with the destined successors to the crown by their exertions in their favour, the whig party numerous, able, compact, and skilful, had probable grounds for conceiving that its power would be lasting. This expectation, however, proved vain: soon after their power had reached its highest zenith, it was overthrown by trifling instruments. An inferior menial first broke one great tie by which the queen was bound to the whigs, and through them to the continental confederacy: and was the means of conforming her political conduct to the wishes of the tories, by disposing her to abandon the whig administration, and its political plans. She was soon impressed with an opinion, that the church was endangered, from the prevalence of the whigs, and their friends the dissenters. Meanwhile, the high church party was extremely active in inciting the people against their adversaries: they represented the war which had brought very heavy and oppressive burthens on the public, as carried on now for the interested purposes of the ministers. According to the tories, the increasing taxes, and the loss of so many countrymen and relations, were now no longer undergone for the security and glory of England, but to gratify the ambition and avarice of an interested faction. Besides the horrors of a now unnecessary war, the whig counsels (they asserted) and measures were pernicious in peace, and tended to overthrow government and religion. The whigs were schismatics, infidels, republicans and levellers. The church was in the most imminent danger, and must perish, unless the people were roused to overwhelm the whigs and dissenters. Eagerly urged by clerical demagogues and other ardent partizans, these topics now spread the alarm which had in vain been attempted some years before. The train having been thus laid, a person was not long wanting to light the match. Sacheverel, a furious adventurer in high church doctrines, without ability, learning, or eloquence, directed the opinions, and guided and stimulated the conduct, of the majority of the people throughout England. His discourses, contemptible in themselves, were venerated and adored, for the reason which has so often procured currency and admiration to frivolous nonsense or inflammatory fanaticism; they declaimed for the popular

* See Hoadley, Tindal, and many other literary supporters of the whigs.

[Whigs support the protestant succession. Union with Scotland.]

prejudices which then happened to be afloat. The fumes of bigotry which he blew up might have evaporated, had not the whigs, by a trial, taken the most effectual means to give him and his inculcations importance. Exalted by a well deserved but ill-judged impeachment, Sacheverel afforded a lesson to future statesmen and politicians, of the inefficacy of persecution to remove popular delusion. The extravagant ravings of this infuriated bigot were received throughout the kingdom as oracles of wisdom. Imbibing the general sentiment, the queen became eagerly desirous of being freed from the whig administration. Addresses, drawn up in the moment of enthusiasm, were represented as the dictates of conviction and solid reasoning. During the popular ferment, parliament being dissolved, the elections (as might have been with certainty foreseen) proved decidedly favourable to the promoters of the ferment; the whigs were dismissed. Mr. Harley professed to desire a coalition of parties; but the means that were employed by those whom he now headed, being very inimical to such a junction, the tories held the offices of administration which had been forcibly wrested from the whigs, and these two parties became irreconcilable adversaries. As the tories had represented their party as the only friends of the church and monarchy, the whigs declared themselves the only supporters of constitutional liberty and the protestant succession; and imputed the peace to a partiality for Louis, as the supporter of arbitrary power and the pretender. With a resolute firmness, adhering more closely to their principles and party than even when in office, the whigs were a very powerful body to promote or thwart any political measure. Both principle and interest bound them to the house of Hanover; they impressed that family with the persuasion, that both the internal and foreign politics of the tories were intended and calculated for the restoration of James Stuart; that the queen eagerly desired that violation of the parliamentary settlement; that the whigs, and they only, were securing the throne to the protestant succession; and thus, that when the Hanoverian prince should be called to the crown, he would find his subjects divided into two parties: the one his friends, and the other his enemies. Successful in conveying to the court of Hanover this opinion, they gave to its princes a bias, which lasted long after their accession to the British throne.

From zeal for the protestant accession, as well as from sound and comprehensive general policy, proceeded a measure which though opposed by narrow views of national prejudice and pride, has been momentarily beneficial to the two countries that formerly constituted separate kingdoms in the island of Great Britain. The union for ever put an end to those internal wars which had formerly occasioned the desolation of both. It detached Scotland from a connexion with France, not less hurtful to herself than troublesome to England. It prevented the crowns from being separated,* as would have most probably taken place, had the two kingdoms continued in a state of political disunion. It delivered both nations from the impending

* See proceedings in the Scottish parliament and nation, from the first years of queen Anne till the union; and the views not only of the jacobites, but of the presbyterians. See Somerville, Cunningham, Smollet, &c.

[Advantages to both kingdoms. Commerce and navigation under queen Anne.]

evils of a controverted regal succession, and the fears which were justly entertained for the protestant religion and civil liberty. Preserving to both countries the protestant faith and a free limited monarchy, both in ecclesiastical and civil concerns, it left to each party the forms, articles, institutions, and laws, to which they were most accustomed and attached, which were interwoven with their manners, their sentiments, their opinions, their property, their domestic and civil engagements, and their duties. Both Scotland and England could now impart to each other, their respective advantages, and both were gainers by the participation. Of the two, the party which laboured under the greatest wants, no doubt acquired the greater advantage by a co-partnership, which afforded the means of supply; but the benefit which Scotland derived, being still dependent on her own industry and skill, she by those very qualities promoted the interest of England. Without minutely scrutinizing the comparative emoluments of both, we evidently perceive, that England and Scotland, in the means of subsistence, accommodation, defence, riches, power, comfort at home, and respectability abroad, are both severally and jointly beyond all calculation benefited by the Union.

Commerce continued in this reign to increase in enterprise, skill, and success: the views of merchants were enlarged, as their importance so greatly rose in the community. The war, no doubt, interrupted trade, by the capture of ships; this evil, to a certain degree unavoidable, was heightened by the inattention of the admiralty to the important department of its business, which should provide convoys. The near relation of the lord high admiral to the sovereign, through delicacy prevented so close and vigorous investigation into the conduct of naval affairs, as the interests of commerce and the good of the country required. But notwithstanding these disadvantages, manufactures and commerce were extremely flourishing. Civil and religious liberty invited many industrious and skilful foreigners into this country; while others fled thither from the horrors of war. The enlarged policy of the whigs, who saw the advantages that had resulted, and were resulting, from the emigration of ingenious and industrious refugees, and who knew that the wealth and power of the nation rises with the number of capable and active inhabitants, in order to attach the late emigrants completely to the country, proposed that they should be naturalized, and a law was actually passed for that purpose; which, lasting till near the end of the reign, was extremely favourable both to trade and public credit. The refugees promoted manufactures and merchandise, and were also purchasers to a very considerable extent in the funds. One very convincing proof of the increase of commerce during this reign, was the rise of public credit; the ease with which very large supplies were raised for the use of government; and the readiness with which loans were obtained at six per cent. instead of eight, amounting to upwards of three millions annually,† besides the yearly taxes. Our North American colonies continuing to experience that wise and benignant policy,

* According to the value of money and estimation of expenses in those times.

† The national debt, which, at the commencement of Anne's reign, was

[Political economy not well understood. Character of her reign.]

which, satisfied with affording protection and claiming general allegiance, left internal efforts and industry to their own course, was the most important and rising market for British manufactures and commerce.*

The trade to the West India colonies was also now of considerable importance. The East India traffic, small as it was, compared with present times, yet notwithstanding the cessation of competition by the union of the two companies into one, was making a lucrative accession to British opulence. Our trade with Spain almost ceased during the war concerning its crown; but our traffic to other parts of Europe, and to Africa, was, from our maritime strength and the weakness of our enemies, proportionably enlarged. Exerting our naval force in annoying the enemy, and (though not uniformly) in protecting our own commerce, we fully taught contending nations a lesson, which they might have partially learned before, that if weaker commercial naval powers are fighting with a stronger, while the inferior loses his mercantile gain, the superior, by commanding the seas, promotes his trade. Of commercial treaties concluded in this reign, the convention with Portugal proved beneficial to this country, though it showed that the principles of commercial philosophy were not yet thoroughly understood. The revered authority of Locke had impressed statesmen with a very erroneous principle in political economy, that national wealth consists in the quantity of gold and silver which a country possesses; that therefore the chief object of a commercial statesman is to increase these precious metals. The professed object of Mr. Methven's treaty with Portugal was to procure for our commodities gold from the Brazils; a purpose which might have been effected without any treaty, while Britain could supply such articles as the possessors of gold wanted. The interchange has, on the whole, proved more lucrative to the Portuguese than to the British: still, however, though the balance of trade may have been against us with Portugal,† it has been advantageous as a source of traffic, of revenue, and a nursery for seamen. The chief objections to the commercial treaty of Utrecht were founded on the same erroneous system.‡ It was alleged, that a treaty with France, by interfering with our treaty with Portugal, would diminish our imports of Brazil gold.

Anne's reign, notwithstanding a war of eleven years, was favourable to commerce, and the prosperity of the country. In her external relations, Britain made much greater and more extensive efforts on the continent, than at any former period, though she was precipitate and impolitic in the negotiation at Utrecht, and thereby yielded much too advantageous terms to the aggressor, whom she had vanquished; yet, in the misery of his people, the bankruptcy of his finances, and the

16,394,701*l.* 10*s.* 7½*d.*, at the end of it amounted to 33,681,076*l.* 5*s.* 6½*d.* As by far the greater part of this debt was owing to British subjects, it is a proof how much commerce and private riches must have been augmented.

* See the statement quoted by Mr. Burke from official documents in his speech, March 22d, 1773, on conciliation with America.

† See *Wealth of Nations*, vol. ii. p. 325.

‡ That a trade may be advantageous to a party, against whom the balance is, is now very evident; as may be clearly seen in the *Wealth of Nations*, and also in the marquis of Lansdowne's speech on the commercial treaty with France.

[George I. His attachment to the whigs.]

discomfiture of his force, she evinced to Louis, that the unjust ambition of the French sovereign which compelled Britain to arm against him, rendered that fine country wretched, which might have been happy.

While the parties, that raged with such violence from the dismissal of the whig ministry, were increasing in mutual hatred and inveteracy, the death of Anne called a new family to the throne.

George, elector of Hanover, a prince of a solid and vigorous capacity, well skilled in the history of politics and interests of the different European powers, a brave, prudent, experienced general, was in the prime of life, when, as next protestant heir of the royal line, he became by the rule of inheritance, as it had been modified by the king and parliament, sovereign of these realms. In his person, hereditary succession was as closely adhered to as was compatible with liberty and religion: the direct and next presumptive heirs having chosen to disqualify themselves, the next who had not disqualified himself succeeded. George, a great grandson of a king of England, sprung from that king's daughter, came to the throne; instead of James, another great grandson of the same king, sprung from his son. Hereby the extent and limitations of hereditary succession to the crown were ascertained: the lineal heir was to succeed, unless, by refusing to comply with the conditions required, he himself should virtually renounce the inheritance.

Fitted by his talents, dispositions, and character, to govern his new kingdoms suitably to their interests and views, George's administration gave much satisfaction to those who had stood forth as the champions of civil, religious, and constitutional liberty. Policy as well as inclination attached him first and chiefly to the whigs, the strenuous supporters of himself and his family. The tory leaders, in the last ministry of queen Anne, had gone such length in opposing the whigs, as to be deemed inimical to the succession of the house of Hanover. If they did not design the restoration of the lineal heir, their actions had appeared conducive to that purpose. They had cultivated a close intercourse with Louis, the great patron of the pretender; promoted known jacobites to civil and military offices; and dismissed from the army whig officers, to make room for persons attached to the house of Stuart. At the election, jacobites had been countenanced and chosen, through the influence and patronage of the tory party.* The ministers had effected the repeal of the barrier treaty, which bound the states-general to guarantee the protestant succession; were extremely cold to the Dutch, the zealous friends of that settlement; and encouraged invectives against king William, its framer, and all its principal supporters. The tories encouraged writings and writers inimical to the protestant succession. The high church, so much venerated by the tories, abetted the doctrines of indefeasible hereditary right, and were ardent in inculcating intolerance to dissenters, the warm friends of the revolution and protestant succession, and enemies of jacobitism and the principles by which it was upheld. While the tories so acted, as to exhibit a probable appearance of a friendly

* See Somerville's Dissertation on the Danger of the Protestant Succession, at the end of his history, *passim*. Cunningham's History.

[Intemperate violence of that party.]

disposition to the jacobites, they strenuously opposed every measure desired by the friends of the house of Hanover as conducive to the security of the protestant succession.* Although the concurrence of so many circumstances did not positively prove the tory leaders to have formed a design against the Hanoverian succession, and though they all might have arisen from different causes, yet they together constituted such a degree of probability, as to render it prudent in the king to repose his first trust in the whigs, and to be cautious and circumspect in bestowing high offices on any of the active tory leaders until he had investigated their intentions. But, perhaps, it might have been practicable for the king to have gradually conciliated the greater number of the most active tories. His promotion of whigs exclusively, and dismissal of tories indiscriminately, from the recent conduct of both respectively, was natural, though a more comprehensive scheme of policy would have been wise. At the time of the accession, the passions and prejudices of both sides were extremely high. The cool and impartial examination of a discerning and unbiassed stranger must have seen, that there were on both sides great abilities and great virtues, mingled with the violence and excesses of party zeal; and that the leading and acting men on both sides might be rendered useful in various departments of public service. But George, though discerning, was not unbiassed; though calm in his own temper, judicious in his opinions, and temperate in his conduct, yet, from his situation, and the connexions which it had dictated, he was become the member of a party; and ascended the throne of England, on the one hand, with the liberal and enlightened principles, but on the other with the prejudices and passions, of an English whig. Choosing from that party his ministers and confidential advisers, he not only, by this first measure of his government, disgusted the tories, on account of the exclusive preference of their adversaries, but imbibing the resentments of the whigs, too readily and hastily countenanced their prosecutions. The intemperance of ministerial proceedings excited great displeasure among the friends and supporters of the prosecuted leaders, and giving particular umbrage to the high church party, inspired the jacobites with a notion, that the disapprobation testified or discovered on account of these acts, and the partiality of the king to the whig party, indicated a general dissatisfaction with the whole system of his new government. From this misapprehension, they conceived the opportunity favourable to the pretender. Hence, together with the instigations of the old tyrant of France, arose the rebellion of 1715. The comparatively small number of those who joined in this insurrection, and the vast majority which adhered to king George, to civil and religious liberty, proved, that, though certain councils of ministry were not agreeable to the whole of the nation, yet the house of Hanover was firmly established on the throne. The trifling attempts that were afterwards made in the same reign, being so speedily discomfited, confirmed the same position. Indeed it was evident that the good sense of the British, their firmness and patriotism, would strenuously and successfully resist every future attempt to deprive them of the

* See Swift's Thoughts on the present State of Affairs, *passim*.

[Prosecutions. Septennial parliaments.]

blessings which they enjoyed under the house of Hanover. It was farther obvious, that the security of the king and the existing establishment rested solely upon his subjects themselves, as by those only the disturbances were quelled. But though the number of those who actively rose against the king was but small, very many continued dissatisfied with the monopoly of favour and confidence enjoyed by the whigs. That policy, justifiable only if necessary, maintained a very great division in the kingdom, and precluded the nation from the services of many brave, able, and enterprising men. The prosecutions against the tory leaders very strikingly manifested the injustice and oppression arising from a violent spirit of party. The most arbitrary ministers could not have wrested facts and circumstances more, to give a plausible colour to tyranny, than the professed champions of liberty in their constructions of lord Oxford's acts : in their endeavours to impute treason* to Bolingbroke and Atterbury, and in compelling the most illustrious and able men, without any evidence of guilt, to seek refuge in exile.

The first years of the whig administration being employed chiefly in reducing their adversaries, they afterwards proceeded to a system of general policy. Their professed objects were, to secure the protestant succession, and to promote the financial and commercial prosperity of the country. The real tendency of their conduct, however, in a great degree, was to extend the influence of ministry over the monied interest and the legislature. The first parliament which met after George's accession, being elected when the whigs had just recovered their superiority, consisted in a great measure of members of that party. Before the three years had expired, ministry had declined very much in popularity. The nation, though it had shown itself firmly attached to the establishment, did not approve of the exclusive government of one class of men. There was much reason, therefore, to expect, that a new election might return many representatives not friendly to the whig monopoly.

To prevent so probable an obstruction, the whig leaders formed a very bold and effectual project : this was to procure an act establishing septennial parliaments instead of triennial, and prolonging the present for four years. The amount of this act was, that delegates, chosen by their constituents for three years, voted without the consent of these constituents, that the trust should last for four years longer than it had been conferred by the owners. The alleged reason was, the prevalence of disaffection and jacobitism, which the ferment of a new election would stimulate and promote. Triennial parliaments served to keep up party divisions : a longer term would contribute powerfully to the evaporation of discontent and factious passions, and secure the protestant settlement and the tranquillity of the country. The opponents of the change insisted, that on the same principle by which trustees continued their office beyond the appointment of their employers, they might render their power perpetual, and cease to depend on those employers; that so long a duration would afford to

* Swift's account of the mode proposed in the academy of projectors, for discovering plots and conspiracies, was not a much overcharged satire against the whig deviators from the salutary strictness of Edward III.'s definitions of treason.

[Growth of ministerial influence. Walpole. Foreign relations.]

ministers an opportunity of systematizing corruption, and establishing by its means an influence over the legislature, which might render that body merely instrumental in the hands of the executive government; that the will of the king and minister would be the sole rule of legislative as well as executorial conduct; that the power of the crown would, through the whigs, be rendered really much greater than the tories had ever wished to establish or support.

It is certain, that ministerial influence in this reign, whether from the long continuance of parliament, or other causes, became much greater than at any former time. Corruption had been carried to a considerable length by the whigs, in the time of queen Anne, on particular occasions: but it was reserved for Walpole to establish it as a methodical and regular engine of government: and to bribe in a dexterous and circuitous manner, which might not only escape detection, but in some degree even impose on the receiver, and which might make him suppose that to be the reward of merit from his country which was really the wages of service to a minister. Closely connected with stock-jobbers, and other adventurers, in projects for the acquisition of money, Walpole found, through loans and similar government transactions, various opportunities of bestowing indirect donatives. Nor was he sparing in direct presents. He appears to have been the first minister who thoroughly understood the mode of managing parliaments, and making law-givers willing tools in the hands of the court. He first completely succeeded in identifying, according to the apprehension of the majority, compliance with ministers, and patriotism; opposition to ministers, and disaffection to the constitution. George's reign is an epoch in parliamentary history, as, since that time, whether ministers have been able or weak, wise or foolish, they have rarely failed to have the co-operation of parliament in their projects, whether useful or hurtful. The influence of the crown was established on the most solid basis by the whig party, and the whig leader sir Robert Walpole.

The relative state of Britain and foreign powers did not require from this country any great efforts. Louis XIV. after for sixty years disturbing the tranquillity of Europe, was at length dead. During the minority of his successor, the regent of France, fortunately for his country, from private and personal ambition, cultivated amity and intercourse with England, in hopes that should the young king die, Britain might assist him in succeeding to the throne, in exclusion of the still more nearly related Philip Bourbon of Spain. These selfish views long cherished peace and alliance between the two chief powers of the world. France being pacific, none of the other nations could afford any serious ground of alarm. The menaces of Charles XII. or the displeasure of the czar of Muscovy, excited little apprehension. The repeated attempts of Spain to promote the claims of the pretender, and to disturb the peace of Britain, unassisted by France, were easily crushed or prevented. A signal defeat at sea effectually convinced the Spanish king of his impolicy in provoking the attack of an English fleet. The harmony which prevailed between France and George I. though arising from temporary coincidence of views in his majesty and the French regent, rather than from an enlarged comprehension of solid and permanent interests, was beneficial

[King's partiality for Hanover. Avarice. South sea bubble.]

to both parties ; by allowing the two countries in tranquillity to recover from the evils of the dreadful wars which had occupied the two preceding reigns, it manifested to both, that sound policy dictated agreement, and not discord, to the two first kingdoms of the universe. The king, in his negotiations and engagements with France and with other powers, intended to strengthen the security of the protestant succession : that was the chief object of the greater number of the treaties in which his history so very much abounds. Large and numerous subsidies were paid to purchase assistance, or to buy off apprehended and threatened hostility.*

The party in opposition to ministers asserted, that as the various attempts made in favour of the pretender, had been crushed by British patriotism and energy, the recourse to foreign assistance was totally unnecessary. Experience had shown, that a great majority of the people was disposed and able to support the constitutional establishment. While British subjects were attached to their sovereign, he wanted no foreign props to his throne.

It was extremely natural for his majesty to retain a partiality for his native country, and under that partiality to blend and identify interests that certainly had no real connexion. Some of the treaties concluded, and subsidies paid by Great Britain, were, on very probable grounds, alleged to be employed in promoting the advantage of Hanover, without affording the smallest benefit to this country. The balance of power in the two former reigns, so necessary an object of attention, and so wise a ground of confederacy, though under George I. it produced a multiplicity and variety of alliances, yet really, while France remained quiet, appears to have been in no danger.† The foreign policy, however, of the first George, though perhaps too minute and busy in detail, was, on the whole, fitted to maintain the rank and respectability of his kingdoms among the continental powers. If Britain in his time did not rise in dignity, at least she did not fall.

The connexion between the whigs and the monied interests, produced acts and consequences that make a memorable part of this reign. Commerce had opened the way to riches ; riches acquired, stimulated accumulation ; or contemplated, excited enterprise and adventure. The gains of merchandise are commonly progressive. The high interest paid, or the donatives granted by government on loans, enabled many individuals to acquire fortunes much more rapidly than trade could admit. The fluctuating credit of the national funds opened a source of hazardous gains, by dealing in stock ; or, to use the appropriate term, stock-jobbing. This kind of traffic, that had been rising in frequency as the national debt increased, was become extremely prevalent, and was indeed very much encouraged by the successive ministers of George ; who seeing that jobbing kept up the price of the stocks, considered it as a very beneficial practice. There seemed, indeed, to be a kind of enthusiasm of avarice throughout maritime and commercial Europe at this time, no less violent

* See the treaty concluded with the king of Sweden, in 1717.

† It was upon the anxiety of the British government about the relative strength of its neighbours, that the author of the History of John Bull introduces his hero as keeping a pair of steel yards to weigh his neighbours.

[Infidelity and immorality. Liberal policy of Walpole.]

than the religious or political enthusiasm of other periods. Money was the supreme object of their thoughts; they considered projects of new banks; new schemes of administering or employing established funds; and new modes of traffic, as the means of miraculous accumulation.* On the frenzy of covetousness which impeded the use of sound reason, and generated the most visionary fancies, the deep and designing villany of ministerial projectors contrived the famous South Sea bubble, that burst with such destruction to its deluded votaries. Notwithstanding the ruin which overwhelmed so many from this speculation, there continued a strong propensity to wild and fanciful adventures, for many years afterwards. Stock-jobbing very naturally promotes other species of gaming,† either to increase its gains, or compensate its losses. Gambling became much more frequent than it had been in former times.

The liberal principles and sentiments of the whigs, extending to toleration to the various sects of religionists, continued hateful to the high church; nor were the whigs behind in enmity; their aversion to bigotry carried them into the opposite extreme. Many of them are justly chargeable with infidelity; and their leading politicians, if not unbelievers were indifferent about religion, and great patrons of infidels. The court, in general, was very lukewarm in religious matters. With the minister, himself, his supporters and favourites, articles of faith, the church, and clergy, were most frequent and acceptable subjects of merriment and raillery. Impiety was extremely fashionable in the various gradations of society; to which the court example did not fail to reach. Corresponding to such a state of religion, there was great laxity of manners. To this evil, the conduct of the court had its share in contributing. George, though by no means profligate in his own character, yet tended to encourage licentious gallantry: according to the mode of debauched courts on the continent, the king's mistresses made their appearance regularly among the nobility,‡ were visited by women of the highest rank and fashion, and even introduced to the young princesses his grand-daughters. The minister, and all who possessed or sought favour, paid a most submissive attention to the royal favourites. Where such persons presided, modesty and chastity could not be expected greatly to prevail. Decency and morality were by no means characteristics of George's court.

This reign was favourable to commerce and finance, especially after the appointment of Walpole to be prime minister. The policy of this statesman, constantly and steadily pacific, was by that single but momentous quality, conducive to private and public opulence. Raised to office immediately after the failure of the South Sea scheme, he studiously and earnestly endeavoured to repair the mischiefs produced by that celebrated fraud, and was successful in his efforts. Having settled the business of the South Sea, and restored public credit, he directed his attention to manufactures and trade, and showed that his views were both liberal and extensive. He found the foreign trade

* Besides the famous South Sea scheme, there was the Mississippi plan of Mr. Law, and numberless others on the same visionary principle, though less extensive in influence and importance.

† See Life of Budget, in Bisset's edition of the Spectator.

‡ See Lord Orford's Reminiscences.

[His views of colonies. George II. Adopts the policy of his father.]

shackled with numerous petty duties and impoverishing taxes, which obstructed the exportation of our manufactures, and lessened the importation of the most necessary commodities. He framed the beneficial plan of abolishing all these restrictions, and giving freedom to the most valuable branches of our external and internal commerce.* At his instance, a bill was passed for that purpose. By his persuasion also a law was enacted for encouraging the importation of naval stores from North America. Since these commodities were necessary for the navy, he thought it much wiser to be supplied from our own plantations, especially as we could be furnished at a cheaper rate, and as our colonies took our own manufactures in exchange. Besides, should England be at war with Russia, that source of naval stores might be closed; by Walpole's regulation, another was opened. The promotion of commerce was one great object of his pacific dispositions: he was very averse to hostilities with Spain when threatened in 1726, through the unnatural union between Philip and the emperor. The commerce with Spain was very extensive and important to Great Britain. Such a source of revenue and riches he was unwilling to obstruct by precipitate war. His views of the benefits arising from our foreign settlements, just and sound, presented a lesson of colonial policy, which it would have been fortunate for Britain if his successors had always followed. A speculative projector having proposed, that the American plantations should be subject to taxes, Walpole, with a discriminating and comprehensive idea of their real utility, saw that without impost, by their industry and prosperity, they were rapidly promoting the private wealth and public revenue of Britain, and totally rejected the advice.

In the contest between king George and his son the prince of Wales, Walpole, though he could not avoid giving some umbrage to the heir apparent, yet impressed both him and his princess Caroline, with a very high opinion of his political talents. When, on the king's death, George II. ascended the throne, Walpole was continued in his office, because their majesties thought no other person could be found so well qualified for directing the helm of public affairs.

George II. a prince of upright intentions and the strictest honour, but of moderate talents, and inferior to his father in force of understanding, adopted his political notions and prejudices; considered the whigs as the only subjects to be trusted; entertained groundless alarms of the designs of the jacobites; and renewed or formed numerous alliances for securing the protestant succession.† He was anxiously and incessantly busy with engagements and projects for preserving the balance of power, and very partial to the interests of his German dominions. The minister, adhering to his pacific plans, gratified his

* See Coxe's Memoirs of sir Robert Walpole, part i. p. 164.

† From lord Orford's Reminiscences, it appears that the king intended to choose a new minister; but that the queen, greatly his superior in abilities, who governed his majesty, though she appeared to be implicitly submissive to him, induced him to continue Walpole in office.

‡ The prince of Hesse, the duke of Wolfenbuttle, and other petty princes of Germany, gravely undertook to guarantee the throne of Britain, and received subsidies for their notable services! See Smollet, *passim*; see also the comments of the Craftsman; and Fog's Journal.

[Expense of subsidizing treaties. Taxes]

master by promoting German alliances and subsidies, but prevented the nation from being embroiled in war. Some of his treaties were deemed very impolitic, especially the treaty of Seville, by which Britain introduced a branch of the house of Bourbon into Italy and depressed the house of Austria, the natural ally of England.

Skilful as he was in forming productive schemes of finance, Walpole's public economy was by no means equal to his invention or discovery of pecuniary resources. There was, indeed, a profuse waste of the national treasures. Trade had greatly increased, and many new taxes had been imposed; yet in so long a period of profound peace, which underwent no material interruption from the treaty of Utrecht to the commencement of the war 1739, the whole sum paid off was no more than 8,328,354*l.* 17*s.* 11 $\frac{3}{4}$ *d.* and the capital of the public debt at that time amounted to 46,954,623*l.* 3*s.* 4 $\frac{7}{8}$ *d.* A great source of expenditure was what the minister called secret service money, by which he professed to mean sums required for discovering the secret intentions of neighbouring powers. This fund, according to the minister's account, was extremely useful in enabling him to discover and disconcert the wicked projects of jacobites, and their friends in foreign countries. Another great source of expense, the subsidies to German principalities for watching over the safety, interest, and established government of Great Britain, was also, by the minister's account, to be reckoned a premium paid for insuring the kingdom against jacobites. The balance of power also had its share in exacting subsidies from England. The British statesmen of that time, indeed, appear to have considered the maintenance of an equipoise, as the supreme and constant end of our foreign politics, instead of a *means* sometimes necessary for the security of Britain, and only when necessary, wisely employing British efforts. Although by the act of settlement, it was provided, that Britain should not be involved in any engagements on account of Hanover, yet various treaties and stipulations were made, by which expense was incurred by these realms on account of that electorate. The protestant succession, and balance of power, were also ministerial reasons for the regular and constant maintenance of a much greater number of troops within the kingdom, than the apparent state of internal tranquillity and foreign politics rendered necessary. Cardinal Fleury, as pacifically disposed as the British minister, and having unlimited control over the weak and incapable Louis XV., cultivated a friendly intercourse with England. The emperor found it his interest to resume his connexions with Great Britain, in order to secure the pragmatic sanction, by which his hereditary dominions were guaranteed to his daughter, his only issue. Spain interfering with certain parts of our trade on coasts to which she pretended an exclusive right, employed no efforts which a naval force, vigilantly exerted and judiciously stationed, might not have prevented. Other states were either too inconsiderable, or too remote, to give any alarm to Great Britain, or to render any unusual military exertions necessary. The taxes required by the minister for defraying expenses, deemed by a considerable part of the nation useless, were felt as severe grievances. The regular increasing pressure, however, caused much less displeasure and alarm, than one of the modes proposed for levying the imposts; this scheme of establishing

[State of parties. Whig connexion.]

an excise on wine and tobacco, though if the assessments were at all necessary, as productive, and as little burthensome* a means of collection, as could be adopted in such subjects of revenue; yet, from party ardour and misrepresentation, combined with the interest of smuggling merchants, raised such a clamour as would have driven him from his office unless he had abandoned his proposition.

The opponents of his administration, or any of his counsels, the minister affected to consider as enemies of the state; and succeeded in impressing that opinion on many patriotic and loyal subjects, and also on the king himself, who, possessing honest intentions and not great sagacity of understanding, was credulous, and easily duped by the professions of those whom he regarded as his friends. The ability of Walpole did not only convince the king, that the adversaries of the minister were the enemies of the house of Hanover, and of the protestant succession, but even imprinted the same notion on the superior penetration of the queen. Caroline, indeed, as is now well known, was the chief supporter of Walpole, as she was the supreme director of his majesty.† But, with the address of a stronger mind governing by influence a weaker, she cautiously concealed from the king himself her power over his public measures. Walpole established with the court party the following doctrine: "Whoever opposes this whig administration is a tory; all tories are jacobites; every one, therefore, that opposes the minister, is a jacobite." So much is the generality of mankind governed by words instead of precise ideas, that many expressed their approbation of secret service money, foreign subsidies, the increase of the army, and frequent suspension of the *habeas-corpus*, to demonstrate that they were not jacobites. The minister, indeed, was supported by the principal whig families, by those who, styling themselves the whig connexion, have professed to think that they, and they only, supported the principles of constitutional liberty and the protestant succession: and, therefore, that they only ought to be intrusted with the administration of affairs under the house of Hanover. This combination was strengthened and consolidated by domestic affinities. The great whig houses, by an extensive chain of intermarriages, formed a kind of family compact, subservient to their political schemes for governing the state. Walpole held his office by various tenures; his own abilities, and his declared attachment to whig principles and the protestant succession; his efforts for keeping out the pretender, and supporting the monied interest; for extending commerce, and improving revenue, and maintaining the balance of power: he was farther strengthened by the whig junto, guided by his talents and address; the high opinion and attachment of the king and queen, and the conviction of both that his councils chiefly and most effectually secured them on the throne. He riveted the confidence of George, by the zealous promotion of his electoral and subsidizing projects. He possessed many personal friends, whom he had attached to himself by his conduct, the apparent openness and familiar ease of his manners, by accumulated benefits, and especially by a liberal and judicious distribution of secret service

* See *Wealth of Nations*, vol. iii. p. 358.

† See Lord Orford's *Reminiscences*, and Coxe's *Memoirs of sir Robert Walpole*, *passim*.

[Walpole's literary advocates. Opposition. Bolingbroke.]

money. He had also, through the last mentioned means, a very numerous body of supporters in LITERARY MEN, at least in *writers*, who in various departments of composition, historical,* political, theological, in lyric and dramatic poetry,† praised the ministerial plans, and vilified the opponents of government. Perhaps, indeed, in the history of literature, never had so many pens been employed in panegyricizing a court or ministry, as while sir Robert Walpole directed the helm of affairs.

With such intrinsic and extrinsic power, Walpole continued longer in office‡ than any minister since the Cecil of Elizabeth.

In all that time, he had experienced great opposition, and uniformly resisted attacks with an ability and address that very dexterously adapted themselves to the changing nature and mode of political enmity which he had to encounter. Though the minister endeavoured to represent the opposer of his schemes as the supporter of the pretender, he very thoroughly knew that the greater number were not friends to the house of Stuart. The adversaries of Walpole consisted of different, and indeed heterogeneous, classes of political men. First, there were discontented whigs, who disapproved of his measures, and repined at the preference given to sir Robert Walpole over themselves: secondly, the tories, who were displeased at the exclusive promotion of the whigs, but not inimical to the house of Hanover: and thirdly, the jacobites. Though these last were unfriendly to the family on the throne, many of them contented themselves with wishes, and appeared nowise disposed to hazard their own lives and fortunes in order to elevate the pretender to the throne. They adhered to the tories, in hopes with them to foment and increase national discontent. Expectations had arisen, on different occasions, that the minister's downfall approached: the tories and the opposition whigs respectively hoped to succeed, but both were disappointed. The splendid genius of Bolingbroke, now pardoned and returned from exile, animated and directed the tories; while the acute and strong understanding, brilliant wit, vigorous and impressive eloquence of Pulteney, headed the disaffected whigs. Different as these two classes were in abstract political opinion, yet they concurred in present object and proximate motive: they both desired to overthrow the minister. The jacobites were no less desirous of the dismission of the whig connexion, and Walpole individually. A coalition was now deemed expedient: and the anti-ministerialists, with Bolingbroke and Pulteney at their head, became one united body; the former being the chief framer of their schemes, the latter the most active and efficient agent in parliament. Their plan of operations was, by the union of parliamentary and literary talents, and their combined influence, first to sap, and then destroy the power of Walpole. In the execution of their plan, they set on foot the celebrated Craftsman, which, with great and comprehensive ability, viewed the various causes of discontent, and, with versatile ingenuity, adapted itself to the numerous classes of the discontented. This paper attracted high churchmen, by ridiculing and satirizing

* Tindal, Oldmixon, &c.

† Eusden, Cibber, &c. Of pamphlets, periodical journals, and political sermons, there was a vast multiplicity of writers.

‡ From his second appointment in 1720, to his dismission in 1741.

[The Craftsman. Resignation of Walpole.]

low churchmen, whig bishops, and particularly Hoadley. Reprobating the impolicy and iniquity of continental alliances and subsidies; secret service money, taxes, and stock-jobbing; the mischiefs that arose from a funding system, the anticipation of future industry, and the immense mass of corruption which ministers had established through the command of so much national treasure; and the evils of the South Sea scheme, cotemporary and subsequent bubbles, all which originated in the national debt; it gratified the tories. To please the jacobites, it exposed the expensive inconvenience and uselessness of engagements incurred by Britain for the sake of Hanover; and exhibited the present government as in its conduct totally opposite to the principles and stipulations of the act of settlement. To the whigs it appealed, upon their own genuine and original doctrines and sentiments. The present administration had, by unexampled corruption, established an influence more despotical, than the power which the most tyrannical of the Stuarts ever sought. Through corrupt legislators, the influence of the crown invaded our property by exorbitant taxes, totally unnecessary for the security of the country, and employed the money, either for bribery, the increase of a standing army, or some other means of giving efficacy to ministry, at the expense of British liberty and property. The promoters of boundless kingly power, by whatever means, direct or indirect, must be vigorously opposed by every real whig: the supporters of ministry were only nominal and pretended whigs, whose great object it was to extend the influence of the executive government. These varied reasons, addressed to different political classes, the ablest men of opposition, both in parliament and the Craftsman, as well as in subordinate publications, adapted to particular subjects, occasions, and circumstances. Accommodating their strictures to the political diversities of Englishmen, they spoke also to principles in which they were very generally agreed. They addressed their mercantile and warlike spirit; they inveighed against the depredations of the Spaniards, as injurious to our national interest; and our long and tame sufferance of these, as incompatible with national honour. At last they succeeded in driving the nation to war with Spain, and compelling Walpole to retire from the administration of British affairs.

That dexterous politician, knowing the nation to be incensed against him, when he saw that it would be impossible for him any longer to retain his office, found means to secure an indemnity and a peerage; to divide the party that had exerted itself so long, eagerly and strenuously, against his measures; and to form a coalition with a considerable body of his adversaries. By this means, he ensured the undisturbed enjoyment of his riches and honours. The people thought themselves betrayed by the late declaimers against ministerial corruption; and in their resentment toward those whom they branded as apostates from patriotism, forgot their rage against sir Robert Walpole. The administration that was now formed consisted chiefly of whigs, with some tory converts. They engaged warmly in continental politics, and, in a great degree, merely to gratify his majesty's electoral prepossessions, involved the nation in war much farther than was necessary for the security of Britain.* They encouraged ~~weakness~~ and

* See Smollet, vol. i. chap. 7. *passim*.

[Continental affairs. Attempt of the pretender.]

subsidies for purposes totally useless to the country, though requiring immense sums of British money; and they supported the introduction of foreign mercenaries for guarding and defending England.

France having, by long peace and prosperous commerce, repaired the strength that had been exhausted by the splendid but infatuated ambition of Louis XIV. resumed her usual character, and disturbed the tranquillity of the continent. The death of the emperor afforded her a favourable opportunity of interfering in the affairs of Germany; and, notwithstanding her accession to the pragmatic sanction, of endeavouring to wrest possessions from the queen of Hungary. The critical situation of the house of Austria rendered it expedient for Great Britain to employ a considerable force to prevent Maria Teresa from being overpowered. From the loyal and patriotic zeal of her gallant subjects, together with the contributions of Great Britain, the Austrian dominions were soon delivered from the impending danger. Thus far impartial politicians approved of British interference; but when vast sums of money were expended for adjusting disputes in the north of Germany, by which it was impossible the interest of Britain could be either directly or indirectly affected, very great discontents arose. Under the pressure of enormous taxes, the people grievously complained, that a great portion of the fruits of their industry were employed to promote the interests of Hanover, and afforded the contributors no advantage in return for their contributions. In the ardour of continental projects, the British government bestowed very inadequate attention on the chief bulwark of British power. Our commerce was much more annoyed than at any former period, even while we had to contend with Spain only as principal. France having soon without provocation taken a part in the war, our trade was extremely distressed. The merchants loudly complained that their interests were neglected, and joined in an outcry against the electoral prepossessions of the king, to which they said our commerce and navy were sacrificed. The employment at this time of a great body of Hanoverian troops within this island, added to the dissatisfaction of the nation; and the Hanoverians became extremely unpopular. The jacobites, seeing the prevailing sentiment, earnestly promoted the discontent; but conceived it to be much greater than it eventually proved. They exaggerated the displeasure which was excited by the king's supposed preference of Hanoverian to British interest, and construed it into a dislike of the house of Hanover, in hopes that the dissatisfaction might pave the way for the re-establishment of the house of Stuart on the British throne. Foreign powers conceived the same idea, and France attempted an invasion. The naval force of England, however, began now to be better directed, and easily crushed every open attempt of the enemy.

The arrival of the young pretender the following year, proved that loyalty and patriotism in British hearts, when the king and country are attacked, absorb all partial discontents. The young adventurer, supported by a strong band of heroic though misguided votaries,* found that every attempt was and would be unavailing, to ascend a throne which was confirmed to another by the free choice and interest of the people. Common danger abolished all distinctions; whigs

* See Home's History of the Rebellion in 1745.

[The rebellion favourable to the house of Brunswick.]

and tories, churchmen and dissenters, united against an inroad which threatened the subversion of the constitution and the plunder of property. Government experienced from the funded system one of the chief political advantages which its first authors had predicted. The great numbers who were interested in supporting national credit, vigorously exerted themselves to support the cause with which they considered private and public prosperity as identified. In opposing rebellion and supporting their lawful and constitutional king, they knew and felt they were supporting their liberty, their property, their families, and themselves. The rebellion in 1745 proved a most favourable crisis to the house of Hanover. It marked the difference between disapprobation of certain measures of his majesty or his ministers, and disaffection to the title and government of the house of Brunswick. Britons saw, regretted, and censured the king's predilection for his German territories, and the expense and trouble in which they involved this country: but they discerned that this was only a temporary inconvenience, arising from George II. individually, as it had from his father, but not likely to descend to future representatives of the family of Hanover. The reigning king was not only born in Hanover, but educated there in all the notions and sentiments of the country, and had never left it until he passed his thirtieth year; a period at which the characters of men are formed, matured, and ascertained. It was therefore natural for George to cherish Hanover, once the only object of his expected inheritance, and to attend to its interest much more than was wise and politic in a king of Great Britain. The whigs, whom he had long considered as the props of his kingly power, and who had, from the time of William, been favourable to continental connexions, readily coincided in his electoral projects, and encouraged his costly scheme of subsidizing foreign states to fight their own battles, or the battles of other powers whose success was not necessary to the security of Britain. Frederick prince of Wales, heir of the crown, was a child,* when his grandfather ascended the throne of Britain. Having early imbibed English ideas, he was inimical to such a multiplicity of continental engagements and expensive subsidies, and averse to that policy of his father and grandfather which conferred offices of high trust on one party exclusively. Hence it was expected that when providence should call him to the throne he would be less partial to his Hanoverian dominions, and less disposed to an interference in German politics. The prince had a numerous family, who, being all natives of England, were brought up from their infancy in the opinions and sentiments of Englishmen. Eminent for domestic virtues, his highness and his princess directed their chief attention to the tuition of their children, and especially to initiate their heir in the opinions, principles, sentiments, and dispositions, befitting a personage destined to be sovereign of Great Britain. The rebellion also demonstrated that the house of Brunswick was not supported by a party only, but by the British nation; and probably added strength to the former conviction of the heir of the crown, that a king placed on the throne of Britain should rule for all his subjects, and choose servants

* He was born January, 1707; and was in the eighth year of his age at the accession, Aug. 1st, 1714.

[The Highlands. The continent. The Sea.]

according to merit, and not party creeds; and confirmed his determination to infuse the same doctrine into his eldest son.

The measures speedily adopted for preventing future rebellion, effected a most important and happy change in the northern part of the united kingdom. The overthrow of aristocratical tyranny in the abolition of hereditary jurisdictions, established law and order, extended constitutional liberty, secured property, stimulated industry, and contributed powerfully to civilize the Highlanders, and turn to beneficial efforts that bold energy of character, which had hitherto been chiefly exerted in depredations, féuds, and insurrections. So strongly exhibiting the striking and prominent virtues, the intrepid courage, the indefatigable activity, the invincible hardiness, the unshaken fidelity,* and ardent attachments of those generous mountaineers, actuated by a mistaken principle, pointed them out, when they should be better informed and more fortunately guided, as powerful contributors to the benefit, honour, and glory of Britain.†

In her continental exertions, Britain in this tedious war displayed her usual courage, and incurred enormous expense, without accomplishing any purpose tending to compensate her profusion of blood and treasure; her bravest soldiers, betrayed and deserted by faithless allies, were far out-numbered by their enemies, but, though frequently worsted, they never received a complete and decisive defeat.‡

On their own element, Britons, totally unencumbered with allies, could exert and direct their most valuable force; and although by the remissness of ministers, and the negligence, incapacity, or quarrels of commanders, they performed few brilliant or important exploits in the first years of the war; yet, through the remainder, they were victorious in every quarter, and showed the house of Bourbon, how vain and pernicious to themselves were their attempts to cope with the navy of England.

The peace of Aix-la-Chapelle, concluded on the general principle of reciprocal restitution, without any indemnification to either party for the immense expense and severe losses which the belligerent powers respectively incurred, demonstrated that the two principal contributors, France and England, had grievously suffered by the

* Never did this quality appear more conspicuously eminent and honourable, than in the escape of the unfortunate chevalier; which we cannot better mark than in the words of Smollet: "He (Charles Stuart) was obliged to trust his life to the fidelity of above fifty individuals, and many of these were in the lowest paths of fortune. They knew that a price of thirty thousand pounds was set upon his head; and that, by betraying him, they should enjoy wealth and affluence: but they detested the thought of obtaining riches on such infamous terms; and ministered to his necessities with the utmost zeal and fidelity, even at the hazard of their own destruction." Vol. ii.

† As various Highland chieftains were at this time favourable to king George, their respective clans rendered important services in the course of the rebellion. Selected companies had been already formed into a regular corps; and at Fontenoy, where they first saw an enemy, the forty-second regiment began the tenour of heroism, which through four successive wars they have so uniformly and illustriously displayed, from Fontenoy to Alexandria.

‡ Even at Fontenoy, the French killed and wounded considerably exceeded the number of the British; and our army was able to make an orderly retreat, without the loss of their camp. See Smollet, vol. i.

[National debt. Commerce.]

contest. To the national debt of England, a war of nine years had added 31,338,689*l.* 18*s.* 6½*d.*;* so that the whole debt at this time amounted to 78,293,313*l.* 1*s.* 10½*d.* The addition to French debt, no less considerable, tended to prove, that a war producing such an incumbrance, besides the interruption of commerce and bringing no equivalent, was extremely hurtful to both parties, to the aggressor as much as the defender.

The commercial genius of England rose superior to all interruptions and disadvantages from her political plans. During the last five years of the war, trade had made extraordinary advances; money poured into the kingdom, and private enterprise and public credit rose to an unprecedented height. Mr Pelham, now chief minister, possessing great industry and financial skill, very zealously and successfully promoted the extension of national credit and commerce. Aware of the benefits resulting to Britain from trade with Spain, he cultivated an amicable and close intercourse with that country. He encouraged fisheries, manufactures, and colonization,† the benefits of which have ever since been felt. But the measure by which his administration is principally distinguished, was the reduction of the public interest, with the consent and approbation of the creditors, from four to three per cent. His scheme for this purpose, which would have been totally impracticable unless commerce had been flourishing, money abounding, and the funds very high, was executed with great ease and popularity. The greater number of creditors, having the option of being paid the principal or lowering the interest, chose the latter alternative. Mr. Pelham, indeed, though not distinguished for force or brilliancy of genius, was upright in intention, and indefatigable in application, always directing his understanding to subjects and exertions within the compass of his abilities. Though bred up in party notions, being candid and moderate, he employed coadjutors and agents without regard to their political party, and was one of the most useful ministers that ever improved the blessings of peace to an industrious and commercial people. This peace, however, was destined to be but of short continuance: for Europe was soon engaged in a war more general and extensive than any in which it had ever before been involved.

The origin, proximate causes, principles, plans, events, and results, of this war, to the accession of George III. with the state in which they placed Britain, are particularly detailed in the first chapter of this History.

* See James Postlethwaite's History of the Public Revenue.

† See Smollet, vol. ii. from p. 49 to 104.

HISTORY

OF

THE REIGN OF GEORGE III.

CHAP. I.

Rise, Progress, Operations, and Results of the War 1756 to the accession of George III.

A LIBERAL and expanded policy would have suggested to France, which experienced so little advantage from her wars and ambition, the wisdom of permanent peace. She might thus have cultivated the arts of which her country was so susceptible, and by an intercourse with England, might have improved her commerce and her naval skill. She might have raised herself by industry and beneficial enterprise, instead of seeking to humble her neighbours by efforts at once ineffectual against their object and ruinous to herself. But if she did prefer aggression and war to peace and prosperity, she might have learned from awful experience, that her success had arisen, and must arise, from continental effort, in which she might be and was superior to any power; instead of maritime effort, in which she was and must be inferior to one power.

Another scheme of policy remained; which was, to direct her chief attention to commerce and navigation, in order to rival and surpass England. She saw that colonial establishments very extensively and powerfully promoted our commercial and naval pre-eminence. Her statesmen, confounding effect with cause, supposed our prosperity to have arisen from our plantations: whereas those flourishing settlements, with many other constituents of opulence and power, were really results from skilful industry, acquiring capital under fostering freedom, and thus rapidly increasing and extending its power of operation. They concluded, that the effectual means of out-rivalling Britain was to reduce her colonial possessions. This object count de Maurepas the French minister proposed; and for this purpose formed a plan, which, ever since the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle, operated in various parts of the world, but first and chiefly in North America.

During the seventeenth century neither France nor England was sufficiently acquainted with the geography of America, to ascertain with precision the limits of their respective claims. In treaties* between the two crowns, after general stipulations to abstain from encroachment, the adjustment of bounds had been intrusted to commissioners. Even at the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle, the American limits were still left to be settled as before, and thus a ground remained

* See the treaties of Rhyswick and Utrecht.

[Dispute with the French in America.]

open for future contention. Though the line of demarkation had never yet been ascertained on the frontiers of British America, yet, rapidly flourishing on the coasts, the colonists sought a new source of wealth from the remotely interior country. They cultivated the Indian trade, for which their navigable lakes and rivers opened an easy and expeditious conveyance. Extending to the west of the Allegany mountains, our planters conceived that we had a right to navigate the Mississippi, opening another communication between English America and the ocean. With these views, a company of merchants and planters obtained a considerable tract of land near the river Ohio,* but within the province of Virginia; and were established by a charter under the name of the Ohio Company, with the exclusive privilege of trading to that river. This was a measure by no means agreeable to the court of Versailles; the French had projected an engrossment of the whole fur trade of the American continent, and had already made considerable progress, by extending a chain of forts from the Mississippi, along the lakes Erie and Ontario, to Canada and St. Lawrence. Incensed at the interference of the English in a traffic which his countrymen proposed to monopolize, the governor of Quebec wrote letters to the governors of New York and Pennsylvania, informing them, that as the English inland traders had encroached on the French territories and privileges, by trading with the Indians under the protection of his sovereign, he would seize them wherever they could be found, if they did not immediately desist from that illicit practice.† A denunciation of punishment for the infringement of an alleged right, neither admitted nor proved, met with no attention from the English governors. The Frenchman, finding his complaints disregarded, next year ordered three of the British traders to be seized and carried to Quebec. He confiscated the goods of the accused, and sent the men to Rochelle in France, where they were detained in confinement. The earl of Albemarle, ambassador at Versailles, remonstrated to the French ministry on the unjust confinement of British subjects, and procured their release, with promises from the French ministry, that no grounds of complaint should be suffered to continue; but the insincerity of those professions was soon manifested by the conduct of their servants, which was afterwards commended and justified by the court. Meanwhile the French, pursuing their plan of encroachment, built forts on the territories of Indian tribes in alliance with Britain, at Niagara, on lake Erie, in the back settlements of New York and Pennsylvania. The governor of Virginia, informed of these depredations, sent major George Washington, since so illustrious, with a letter to the commandant of a French fort recently built within the confines of his province. The encroachments, he said, were contrary to the law of nations, repugnant to existing treaties between the two crowns, and injurious to the interests of British subjects. He asked by whose authority the territories of his Britannic majesty were invaded, and required that he should evacuate the country, and not farther disturb the harmony

* So far back as 1716, the governor of Virginia had formed a project of a mercantile company to be established on the Ohio; but the relative politics of George I. and the duke of Orleans prevented the king from granting a charter.

† See Smollet, vol. ii.

[Settlement at Nova Scotia.]

which his sovereign wished to subsist between himself and the French king. The French commandant replied, that it did not belong to him to discuss the right of his master to the territories in question; that he commanded the fort by order of his general the marquis Duquesne; that he would transmit the letter to him, act according to his directions, and maintain the fort, unless commanded by his general to relinquish possession. The English governor now projected a fort to be built on the Riviere Aubeuf, in the neighbourhood of that which the French had recently erected; and the Virginians undertook to provide the stores, and defray the expense.

In more northern parts of British America, the same schemes of encroachment were carried on, with a consistency of design, and perseverance in execution, which evinced that both emanated from one uniform and vigorous plan.

At the peace of Utrecht, Acadia had been ceded by the French to the English; but before the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle it had turned to very little account. During the administration of Mr. Pelham, so auspicious to commerce and revenue, a scheme was formed for rendering this province a beneficial acquisition. An establishment was proposed, which should clear the improveable grounds, constitute communities, diffuse the benefits of population and agriculture, and promote navigation and the fishery. The design having been approved by his majesty, the earl of Halifax, a nobleman of good understanding and liberal sentiments, and at that time president of the board of trade, was entrusted with the execution. Officers and private men, dismissed from the land and sea service, were invited by offers of ground in different proportions, according to their rank, with additional considerations according to the number and increase of their families. A civil government was established, under which they were to enjoy the liberties and privileges of British subjects. The settlers were to be conveyed to the place of destination, and maintained for a year at the expense of government. From the same source they were to be supplied with arms and ammunition for defence, as well as with materials and utensils for agriculture, fishery, and other means of subsistence. In May, 1749, the adventurers set sail from England, and in the latter end of June arrived at the harbour of Chebucto. This port is at once secure and commodious; it has a communication with most parts of the province, either by land carriage, navigable rivers, or the sea, and is peculiarly well situated for fishery. Here governor Cornwallis pitched on a spot for a settlement, and laid the foundation of a town, the building of which he commenced on a regular plan, and gave it the name of Halifax, in honour of its noble patron.

The actual advantage to accrue from the colonization of Nova Scotia, which must be contingent or at least distant, appears to have had less share in inducing Britain to make the establishment, than the desire of securing it from being repossessed by the French; as they, if again masters of the country, might very much annoy the more southern colonies, which were then rapidly flourishing. The French, regarding the new colony with jealousy and displeasure, as promoting the advantage of Britain, and counteracting their own views, did not themselves at first disturb the new settlers, but instigated the Indians to give them every annoyance.

[Disagreement of the commissioners.]

When Halifax was built, the Indians were spirited to commit hostilities against the inhabitants, some of whom they murdered, and others they carried prisoners to Louisburg, where they sold them for arms and ammunition. The French pretended that they maintained this traffic from motives of pure compassion, in order to prevent the massacre of the English captives; whom, however, they did not set at liberty, without exacting an enormous price. These marauders, it was found, were generally headed by French commanders. When complaints were made to the governor of Louisburg, he answered, that these Indians were not within his jurisdiction.

The commissioners appointed to ascertain the limits of the two powers met repeatedly; but the pretensions of the French were so exorbitant, and so totally inconsistent with the letter and spirit of treaties, and the generally understood description of the countries, that they plainly perceived that every attempt to establish amicably a fair demarkation would be vain.* The governor of Canada detached an officer with a party of men to fortify a post in the bay of Chenecto, within the English Nova Scotia, under the pretence of its constituting a part of the French territory. Besides being a palpable invasion of a British possession, this was productive of a two-fold evil to the new colony. When Acadia had been ceded to the crown of England, Annapolis was the chief town, and indeed continued so till the building of Halifax. Many of the French families that inhabited the town under their native government, were suffered, and chose to continue in it, and in fact became British subjects. Not a few, however, still retained their predilection for their mother country, were closely connected with the French establishments in Cape Breton and Canada, and were active partisans in instigating the Indians to molest the English colonists. Encouraged by the vicinity of the fort now raised, they became openly rebellious. By the fortification of the same post, the Indians also acquired an easy entrance into the peninsula, to annoy, plunder, capture, and massacre the subjects of England.

In spring 1750, general Cornwallis detached major Lawrence with a small body of men to reduce the Annapolitans to obedience; but at his approach they burnt their town, forsook their possessions, and sought protection from monsieur la Corne, who was at the head of fifteen hundred men, well supplied with arms and ammunition. Major Lawrence, knowing that he was unable to cope with such a force in the open field, demanded an interview with the French commandant, and asked on what principle he protected rebellious subjects of Great Britain? La Corne, without entering into any discussion, merely replied, that he was ordered to defend that post, and would obey his orders. The major found it necessary to return to Halifax, and lay the proceedings of the French before the governor. The Annapolitans, better known by the name of the French Neutrals, in conjunction with the Indians, renewed their depredations upon the inhabitants of Halifax, and of other settlements in the province. Incensed at the ingratitude of the French Neutrals towards that country which for near forty years had afforded them the most liberal

* Smollet, vol. ii.

[French line of, forts.]

protection, general Cornwallis determined to expel them from a country which they now so much disturbed. He accordingly detached major Lawrence with a thousand men, attacked the Neutrals and Indians, routed them, and killed and wounded a considerable number, until they took refuge with M. la Corne. This gentleman, an officer under the French king, and commanding that monarch's troops, gave shelter and assistance to rebels against the British government, then at peace with his sovereign. The English built a fort not far from Chenecto, called St. Lawrence, after its founder, and this served in some degree to keep the French and their auxiliary barbarians in check. Still, however, the Indians and Neutrals* were able very often to attack the English in the interior parts of the peninsula. During the years 1751 and 1752, the Indians and their coadjutors continued to disturb, plunder, and butcher the new colonists. In their expeditions they were countenanced and supported by the French commanders, who always supplied them with boats, arms, and ammunition. While the French thus stimulated and assisted the enemies of our country, they were no less active and persevering themselves in encroachment, and continued to erect forts within the English limits, to secure their own inroads and aggressions. They projected, and in a great degree finished, a chain of posts in the north, as they had erected and were erecting a similar chain in the south. It was obviously the intention of the French to command the whole interior country from the river St. Lawrence to the Mississippi, and thereby to prevent intercourse between the Indians and the English colonies: in peace to command all the Indian trade, and in war to enable themselves to make continual inroads upon the English, and to have the whole assistance of the Indians to annoy and devastate the British plantations. Thus they proposed to surround our settlements by a strong and comprehensive line on every side but that next the sea, so as not only to contract our bounds and reduce their productiveness, but to have the means of progressively advancing to the coast, and depriving us of our most valuable possessions. This was their grand scheme of territorial and commercial acquisition in North America; in which they had made very considerable progress, before Britain took effectual steps to check their encroachments. Such was the state of affairs in 1753.

The British government, by repeated representations, was made sensible that the encroachments of France were extremely important; and it was soon discovered, that, besides the other advantages which would accrue to that nation from the transfer of so much of our American trade, and the enclosure of our colonies, she would rapidly enhance the value of her West India islands. A reference to treaties proved, that these pretensions were as contrary to justice, as the resources of the country demonstrated them to be hurtful to our interests. Unwilling, however, to have recourse to hostilities without previously demanding satisfaction, George instructed his ambassador

* At the cession of Acadia to England, a considerable number of its French colonists had, as we have before observed, been permitted to remain in the country, on engaging to yield allegiance to Britain, and undertaking to be neutral in any subsequent dispute between Britain and France; and thence they received the name of Neutrals.

[Appointment of Washington.]

at Versailles to state the grievance, and require redress. The ambassador accordingly represented the injuries which had been sustained by British subjects, through the instigation of the French, and the aggressions made by their governors, in entering our territories and building forts within British limits. He demanded the indemnification of the sufferers, the punishment of the aggressors, and the transmission of orders,* to prevent future violence and invasion, and to demolish the forts already erected. The French court gave general promises of sending such instructions to its officers in America as would preclude every future cause of just complaint. So far, however, was that court from being sincere in its professions, that de la Jonquiere, commander in chief, proceeded more rapidly than before to extend the encroachments. Britain, finding how little the conduct of France tallied with her professions, resolved to assume a different tone, and despatched orders to the governors of America to repel force by force, and to form a political confederacy for their mutual defence.

It was an important object to England, to detach the Indians from their connexion with France, and procure their co-operation with the British settlements. The governor of New York was directed to attempt the accomplishment of these purposes. The undertaking was difficult; the French were employing every art which their versatile ingenuity could devise, to win the attachment of the Indians. The English governor, however, made overtures to the chiefs of the Six Nations; and, by the promise of valuable presents, prevailed on them to open a negotiation. A congress was accordingly appointed at Albany, whither the governor, accompanied by commissioners from the other colonies, repaired. By the few Indians who attended, the proposals of the English were received with evident coldness. They, however, accepted the presents, professed attachment to England, and declared their enmity to France. They even renewed their treaties with Britain, and demanded assistance to drive the French from the Indian territories. To avail themselves of these professions, the British governors sent major Washington, with four hundred Virginians, to occupy a post on the banks of the Ohio. That officer erected a fort to defend himself, until an expected re-enforcement should arrive from New York. De Viller, a French commander, marched with nine hundred men to dislodge Washington; but first summoned the Virginians to evacuate a fort, which was built, as he asserted, on ground belonging to the French, or their allies. Finding his intimation disregarded, he attacked the place. Washington, though inferior in force, for some time defended himself with great vigour; but was at length obliged to yield to superior numbers. He surrendered the fort by capitulation, stipulating the return of his troops to their own country. The Indians, notwithstanding their recent professions and contract, attacked and plundered Washington's party, and massacred a considerable number.

Affairs were now drawing to a crisis between England and France. The French were persevering in a system of encroachment, which the British were determined no longer to permit. It now, therefore,

* Smollet, vol. ii.

[Message from the king. Preparations for war.]

remained for France, either to relinquish her usurpations, and make satisfaction to the injured, or to support injustice by force. As she appeared evidently resolved to embrace the latter alternative, both nations considered a rupture as probable, and began to prepare for hostilities. France sent re-enforcements of troops to America, and England directed her colonies to take proper measures to prevent or repel the inroads of the enemy.

In the internal state of British America there were circumstances favourable to the progress of the aggressors. Each settlement had separate interests, and was internally divided into different factions. Some unreasonable disputes between the executive government and popular speakers in the assemblies, occupied the time and attention which the mutual interests of all parties required to have been devoted to the common defence.

When the British parliament met in 1754-5, his majesty's speech,* without expressly mentioning the probable approach of hostilities, evidently implied a conviction that they were sufficiently probable to call for vigorous precautionary measures. The king declared, that his principal view was, and should be, to strengthen the foundation and secure the continuance of a general peace; to improve the present advantages of tranquillity for promoting the trade of his subjects, and protecting those possessions which constituted one great source of their wealth and commerce. In voting the supplies, parliament made provision for more than the peace establishment of land and sea forces. Meanwhile preparations were making at Brest, and other ports of France. A powerful armament was equipping, and acknowledged to be intended for North America, though the French government continued to make amicable professions.

On the 25th of March, 1755, a message from his majesty informed parliament, that the present situation of affairs rendered it necessary to augment his forces by sea and land; and take such other measures as might best tend to secure the just rights and possessions of his crown in America, as well as to repel any attempts that should be formed against his majesty and his kingdoms. A loyal and suitable address was returned to this message, and a supply voted for the purpose recommended. The French still offered the most solemn assurances of intended amity, and adherence to treaties. With such artifice and duplicity did the court of Versailles conduct itself, that even the instrument of these professions, the ambassador at the court of London, believed his employers to be sincere;† and, on discovering his error, repaired to his own country and upbraided the French ministers with making him the tool of their dissimulation.

Persevering in deceit, the court of Versailles ordered him to return to London, and give fresh assurances of its peaceful intentions. Undoubted intelligence now arriving that a strong armament was ready to sail from Rochefort and Brest, afforded proofs of the little confidence due to the French professions of pacific intentions. The court of London in vain applied to France for redress, and finding her fleet destined for the scene of her continued aggression, naturally and justly concluded her intentions to be hostile, and sent a squadron under admiral Boscawen to watch the motions of the enemy's fleet. Having

* See state papers for that year.
VOL. VII.—11

† See Smollett, vol. ii.

[Aggressions of France. Seizure of French merchantmen.]

sailed toward the end of April for the American seas, to intercept the armament, he reached in June the coast of Newfoundland. The French squadron arrived about the same time at the mouth of the river St. Lawrence. The fogs so prevalent on those coasts, prevented the fleets from seeing each other. A great part of our rival's armament escaped up the river; but the *Alcide* and *Lys*, two ships of the line, with land forces on board, being separated from the rest of the fleet, fell in with two British ships,* and after a vigorous engagement were captured.

This was the commencement of maritime hostilities; and, were we to overlook preceding acts of the French, it might appear to be an aggression on our part; but the fact, as we have seen, was, that they had for several years encroached on our American territories: we had repeatedly applied for redress but in vain; for they continued and increased their invasions. Thus they had commenced hostilities, while we had only used force in our own defence, to weaken an armament which was destined to support and extend their acts of injustice. It is as evident a principle as any in jurisprudence, that injuries attempted may be prevented, and therefore that war to hinder an attack is as lawful as war to repel or punish an injury. The French, however, had done more than attempt, they had inflicted injury, and were continuing in the same course; satisfaction having been demanded, they gave no redress; therefore force on our part was not only justifiable, but necessary. Hostilities being on the side of England just, the conduct of France from the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle, especially her schemes of naval aggrandizement, and the vast increase of her marine, rendered it expedient that we should endeavour chiefly to weaken that part of her power by which we might be most annoyed. Policy coincided with justice in dictating an attack upon her ships; this was really no more than making reprisals at sea for her aggressions on land. As the provocation of the French justified reprisals, prudence required that, in order to weaken the enemy as well as indemnify ourselves, they should be as extensive as possible. The court of London formed a very vigorous and bold resolution: it issued orders, that all French ships, whether outward or homeward bound, should be seized and brought into English harbours. To execute this plan, admirals of the highest celebrity were chosen, and English cruisers were judiciously disposed in every station. Though our squadrons had not the good fortune to fall in with the enemy, our frigates and sloops were so successful in annoying the French trade, that before the end of the year, three hundred of their merchant ships, many of them from St. Domingo and Martinico, extremely rich, and eight thousand of their sailors, were taken. These captures not only deprived the French of a great source of revenue in the property which they contained, but of a great body of seamen, and thus were extremely advantageous to this country. They also afforded a lesson to a power seeking commercial and naval aggrandizement, that no policy could more effectually obstruct such an object, than a hostile attack on Great Britain.

The English and their colonies began regular hostilities in America, to repel the invasions of the French, and to dispossess them of their unjust acquisitions. In the plan of operations for the campaign

* The *Dunkirk*, capt. (late earl) Howe, and the *Defiance*, capt. Andrew.

[Campaign in America. General Braddock.]

1755 in North America, it was proposed to attack the enemy on the confines of Nova Scotia in the north, their forts on the lakes in the west, and on the frontiers of Pennsylvania and Virginia in the south-west. Early in the spring, a body of troops was transported from New England to Nova Scotia, to assist in driving the French from their encroachments on that province. Colonel Monckton was appointed by the governor to command in this service. Three frigates and a sloop were sent up the bay of Fundy, under the command of captain Rous, to second the land forces. The British and provincial troops, attacking a large body of French regulars, Acadians, and Indians, compelled them to fly. Thence Monckton advanced to the fort of Beauséjour, which the French had built on British ground. Investing it on the 12th of June, he in four days forced it to surrender. Changing the name to Cumberland, he secured the possession by a garrison. On the 17th, he reduced another fort; a valuable acquisition, as it was the chief magazine of the enemy in that quarter. Captain Rous, no less successful, obliged the French to evacuate a fort which they had erected at the mouth of the river St. John. These successes secured to England the entire possession of Nova Scotia, which had been so long disturbed by the enemy.

But the most important object of the campaign was, to drive the French from their posts on and near the Ohio. The strongest fort for securing their settlements was Du Quesne, against which an expedition was projected, to consist of British and provincial troops under general Braddock. This commander arrived in Virginia with two regiments in the month of February. When he was ready to take the field, he found that the contractors had provided neither a sufficient quantity of provisions for his troops, nor the requisite number of carriages. This deficiency, however, might have been foreseen, if proper inquiries had been made into the state of that plantation. The Virginians, attending little to any produce but tobacco, did not raise corn enough for their own subsistence; and, being most commodiously situated for water carriage, they had very few vehicles of any other kind. Pennsylvania, on the other hand, abounded in corn, in carts, waggons, and horses; that, therefore, would have been the fitter colony for forwarding military operations. Besides, it would have afforded a shorter route, by equally practicable roads, to the destined place. The choice of Virginia considerably delayed the expedition. From Pennsylvania the commander was at length supplied, and enabled to march; but a fatal obstacle to success still remained in the character of the general. Braddock, bred in the English guards, was well versed in established evolutions. Of narrow understanding, though sufficiently expert in customary details, he had never ascended to the principles of military science. Rigid in matters of discipline, but fully as often for the display of command as the performance of duty, he was very unpopular among the soldiers. Positive and self-conceited in opinion, haughty and repulsive in manners, he closed the avenues to information. Brave and intrepid, he with his confined abilities, might have been fit for a subordinate station, but evidently had not the power, essential to a general, of commanding an ascendancy over the minds of men. The creature of custom and authority, he despised all kinds of tactics and warfare which he had not seen practised. He did not consider, that the same species of contest may not suit the plains of Flanders and the fastnesses of America. The

[Defeat of Braddock. Operations on the Lakes.]

duke of Cumberland had written his instructions with his own hand, and had both in word and writing cautioned him strongly against ambuscade. The self-conceit of his contracted mind suffered him neither to regard these counsels, nor to consult any under his command respecting American warfare. The Indians, if well disposed, would, from their knowledge of their country and their countrymen, have rendered essential service. Disgusted, however, by his overbearing behaviour, most of them forsook his army. On the 18th of June he set off from Fort Cumberland, and marched with great expedition through the woods; but though entreated by his officers, neglected to explore the country. On the 8th of July he arrived within ten miles of Fort Du Quesne, still utterly regardless of the situation or disposition of the enemy. The following day, about noon, as he was passing a swamp between a lane of trees, he was suddenly attacked on both flanks by bodies of French and Indians concealed in the wood. The general, in his dispositions for resistance, showed the perseverance of his obstinacy. He was advised to scour the thickets with grape shot, or with Indians and other light troops; but he commanded his forces to forth in regular order, as if they had been advancing against an enemy in an open country. His soldiers, perceiving themselves misled into an ambuscade, were seized with a panic, and thrown into confusion; which was soon increased by the fall of most of their officers, at whom the dexterous Indian marksmen had chiefly aimed. The general fought valiantly; but receiving a shot, was carried off the field, and expired in a few hours: an awful instance, how little mere courage and forms of tactics, without judgment and prudence, can avail a commander in chief when he is employed on an important service. The provincial troops advancing from the rear, and engaging the enemy, gave the regulars time to recover their spirits and ranks, and thus preserved them from total destruction. Notwithstanding this support, more than half the troops were cut to pieces. The remains of the army made a masterly retreat to Virginia under colonel Washington, to whose skill and conduct it was chiefly owing that they were not overtaken and destroyed; but they thus necessarily left the western frontier exposed to the French and Indians.

The same general object was attempted from the more northern provinces: thence it was proposed to dispossess the French of the cordon of forts erected between and along the lakes. General Shirley, who had succeeded Braddock, ordered the surviving troops to march from Virginia to New-York, that they might join the northern forces. An expedition was accordingly undertaken against two of the principal forts; one at Niagara, between lakes Erie and Ontario, and the other at Crown Point, near lake Champlain. General William Johnson, who having long resided in the interior parts of the province of New York, had learned the language and gained the affections of the Indians, was appointed to command against Crown Point. On the 11th of August the general began his march, and was by the Indians exactly informed of the disposition of the enemy. He found baron Dieskau proceeding against him with a strong body of troops. An advanced party of British provincials and friendly Indians, being attacked by the French suffered considerably before the rest of the army arrived; but Johnson, having come up with the main body, engaged and completely defeated the French forces, of whom almost one thousand were killed.

[Campaign of 1755 unfavourable to Britain. Negotiations.]

Autumn being now far advanced, it was considered as too late in the season to attack Crown Point, and the troops retired to quarters.

Shirley himself headed the expedition to Niagara; but the defeat of Braddock had damped the spirits of the provincials, and even of the British troops, so that not a few deserted. It was the middle of August before he could collect a force sufficient for his purpose; and he was obliged to leave a number of his men to guard the fort of Oswego, on the western confines of New York, lest the French should seize it, and intercept his return. There also he was obliged to wait for provisions till the twenty-ninth of September. The autumnal rains being now set in, many of the Indians deserted the army. It was determined in a council of war, that under all these disadvantages they should defer the projected expedition till the following season. Shirley, therefore, leaving a garrison of 700 men at Oswego, returned to Albany.

Thus, in the campaign 1755, the general object was, to dislodge the French from their usurped possessions in America. This purpose was attempted on the side of Nova Scotia with success: against the French chain of forts with partial advantage, but without ultimate or material effect; and against their encroachments on the confines of Virginia, not only without success, but with grievous disaster: and, on the whole, this campaign in America was unfortunate to Britain. Our losses in that quarter of the world, however, were amply compensated by the decisive blow which was struck in Europe against the trade and shipping of the enemy.

Meanwhile, the contending parties were actively employed in interesting neighbouring princes in their respective causes. France, in conformity to her general plan of naval aggrandizement, bent her most strenuous efforts to inspire Spain with a jealousy of the English, and to render her inimical to this country; but Spain was at this time peculiarly well affected to Britain. Ferdinand VI. was chiefly desirous of cultivating the arts of peace; of rousing his people from the lethargic indolence under which they had so long laboured; of propagating a spirit of industry and encouraging manufactures and commerce. His ablest and most confidential adviser in these projected improvements, was Don Ricardo Wall, a gentleman of Irish extraction, respected for political ability, and, from the conclusion of the peace, Spanish ambassador at the court of London. The minister bestowed great pains in learning the nature and processes of the manufactures and merchandise which had so much aggrandized England; and communicating his various observations to his master, convinced the monarch that, commercially and politically, an amicable intercourse with Britain was, and would be, most conducive to the best interests of Spain. These were sentiments which the catholic king continued to cherish; and when hostilities broke out, the French ministers professed to Ferdinand a desire of an accommodation, but insisted that a suspension of arms in America should be a preliminary. The Spanish king appeared not averse to the office of mediator; but the British minister stated, that, however willing his majesty might be to accept of Spain as an umpire, he could not agree to the proposed preliminary, without hazarding the whole British interests in America. Wall, thoroughly acquainted with the real state of affairs be-

[Subsidiary treaties, discussed in parliament.]

tween the two powers, seconded these arguments, and Spain resolved to observe a strict impartiality in the contest.

With other powers the negotiations of France were more successful. Overtures were made to German princes for succours, which implied an intention of attacking the electoral dominions of the king of England. Hanover had evidently no concern in the disputes between the belligerent powers, and was, respecting France, in a state of absolute neutrality. The design of invading that country was obviously unjust, and contrary to the law of nations. The French, however, knowing the predilection of George for his native dominions, thought that, to protect them, he would make great sacrifices of the British claims in America. Aware of their designs, his Britannic majesty concluded a treaty with the landgrave of Hesse-Cassel, for the employment of eight thousand troops in the service of the king whenever they might be wanted. An alliance was also concluded with Elizabeth empress of Russia, by which she was to hold fifty-five thousand men in readiness for the service of his Britannic majesty.

When these treaties came before parliament, they underwent a very able discussion. The parties in parliament were at this time three; the first consisted of the Newcastle interest; the second was headed by Mr. Fox, with powerful connexions, which were formed and combined by the solid and masculine ability of that statesman; and the third was led by Mr. Pitt, who rested for support on superior genius, splendid eloquence, a bold and intrepid spirit, and the exalted character and extensive popularity which these qualities commanded. Ever since the final downfall of the pretender's hopes, and the discomfiture of the jacobites, the chief offices of government had been bestowed less exclusively upon whigs, than during the first thirty years of the house of Brunswick. Since the death of Mr. Pelham, Mr. Fox had been secretary of state, Mr. Pitt paymaster-general of the forces, and Mr. Legge, Mr. Pitt's friend, chancellor of the exchequer; so that the whig connexion, though the duke of Newcastle was prime minister, did not monopolize administration, and the other servants of his majesty did not always coincide in his grace's political measures. The treaty with Russia was very severely censured by Pitt and Legge, as producing an enormous expense, from which Britain could derive no benefit, since the efforts of Russia could not be employed against the French in North America, where only they were invading our rights and possessions.* The Newcastle party, however, argued, that this danger of Hanover was incurred from her connexion with Britain, without any act of her own: and that it was therefore equitable and just that Britain should contribute towards her defence. On this ground, the treaty was approved by a great majority, and Legge and Pitt resigned their offices. Vigorous preparations were now making for war. In France, several bodies of troops moved towards the northern coasts, and excited in England an alarm of an intended invasion. Ever long it appeared, that the sole design of France was to divert our attention, while she meditated a blow in another quarter.

* There is a very animated description of this debate in a letter from lord Orford. See Horace Walpole to general Conway, dated November 15, 1755. Orford's Works.

[French expedition to Minorca. Admiral Byng declines an engagement.]

The French had prepared an armament in the Mediterranean : at Toulon, twelve ships of the line were ready in April, 1756, and conveyed an army of eleven thousand men to Minorca. Landing there they invested Fort St. Philip on the 25th of April. The ministers and consuls of England, residing in Spain and Italy, had repeatedly sent intelligence to government of the armament preparing, and that they apprehended Minorca to be its object. In this opinion they were confirmed, by certain information that the fleet was 'victualled with only two months' provision, and consequently could not be designed for America, or any distant expedition. General Blakeney, governor of Minorca, under the same conviction, repeatedly represented to the British ministers, the weakness of the garrison of St. Philip, which was the chief fortress of the island. No steps, however, were taken to re-enforce the general, until the French were about to invade Minorca. Convinced at length of the danger, ministry attempted measures of defence; which were neither effectual in force, nor, as it afterwards appeared, in the commander who was intrusted. The French fleet now consisted of fifteen ships of the line, well equipped and manned. Ten only were despatched from Britain, and under the conduct of admiral Byng, who had never acquired a character sufficient to justify so important a trust. On the 7th of April they sailed from Spithead for Gibraltar. The admiral, being instructed to inquire whether the French fleet had passed the Straits, learned at Gibraltar that the enemy had actually descended upon Minorca. He wrote to the admiralty, that if he had been sent in time, he could have prevented the French from effecting a landing. He complained that there were no magazines in Gibraltar for supplying his squadron with necessaries; that the careening wharfs, pits, and storehouses, were entirely decayed, so that he would have the greatest difficulty in repairing his ships; that it would be impolitic to attempt the relief of St. Philip, as it could not be saved but by a land force strong enough to raise the siege; and that a small re-enforcement would only increase the number of men who must fall into the hands of the enemy. This letter implying a charge of culpable negligence against administration, and also anticipating the miscarriage of his enterprise, was very displeasing at home, and rendered Byng odious to government.

The admiral, re-enforced by a squadron under Mr. Edgecumbe, left Gibraltar on the 8th of May.* Arriving off Minorca, he attempted to send intelligence to general Blakeney. The French fleet now appearing, he formed his line of battle. In the evening the enemy advanced in order, but tacked about to gain the weather-gage. The next morning both advanced to the conflict. Rear-admiral West, second in command, attacked the enemy with such force as soon to drive them out of their line; but he was not supported by admiral Byng's division. The admiral, though his own ship had 90 guns, and was well manned and equipped, kept aloof. His captain exhorted him to bear down upon the enemy; but he declared his resolution to avoid the error of admiral Matthews, who, in the preceding war, by pushing too far forward, had broken the line and exposed himself to the enemy's fire. Such precipitation Byng was determined to avoid; and, indeed, so resolutely did he adhere to his cautious plan, that he

* See Smollet, vol. ii.

[Trial and execution of Byng. Declaration of war.]

really did not engage. The French admiral, not wishing to compel a closer fight, took advantage of Byng's avoidance of rashness, and retreated. Calling a council of war, Byng stated his own inferiority to the enemy in weight of metal and number of men; with his opinion, that the relief of Minorca was impracticable, and that it was safest to retire to Gibraltar. The council having concurred in these sentiments, he accordingly did retreat to Gibraltar; and Minorca thus deserted, after a very gallant defence of nine weeks by general Blakeney and his valiant band, fell into the hands of the enemy. The admiralty, informed of this conduct, was extremely enraged against Byng. How, they asked, could he ascertain the impracticability of defending Minorca, without trying the experiment? Was the impression made by West, a proof of the inferiority of our naval force? Had not the English generally prospered from adventurous boldness? Where was the danger of seconding, instead of abandoning, the other division, when it had broken the enemy's line? Was it by such avoidance of contest that England had attained the highest pitch of naval glory? These sentiments extended from the admiralty over the whole nation. A violent popular rage arose against Byng. This predominant passion, said by the historians of the time* to have been cherished by ministers, in order to divert the public attention from their own supineness, naturally overlooked the circumstances of the case. Presuming him guilty without ascertaining the grounds of the alleged guilt, the nation, by anticipating, perhaps in a certain degree produced, the sentence which he afterwards underwent. Byng having been superseded, was brought home under arrest, and committed close prisoner to Greenwich-hospital. He was tried for cowardice, treachery, and not having done his utmost. Acquitted of the two first charges, he was condemned on the last. Great intercessions were made in his favour, and even by the court which sentenced him, to procure the royal mercy. The applications, however, were unsuccessful; though respited for a time, he was shot on the 14th of April, 1757. Many, who did not pretend to vindicate Byng from the charge of misconduct, considered his fall as a sacrifice to the numerous, but now feeble junto, which supported the measures of the duke of Newcastle. Indeed it is evident, that whether Byng's conduct (if he had a sufficient force) arose from timidity, professional ignorance, or gross error of judgment, it was such as demonstrated him unfit for the office with which he was intrusted, and consequently was disgraceful to those ministers who had selected him for that employment. As he never had established a high character as a naval commander, and there were other officers who had attained eminent distinction, it was alleged that the choice of Byng arose from political connexion, and not from personal character. His trial and execution, however, if they for a time diverted the public attention, did not continue to abstract it from the conduct of administration.

Negotiations had still been going on between the courts of London and Versailles; but the king of England, from the invasion of Minorca, considering France as determined to reject all amicable overtures, declared war in May, 1756, and published a manifesto stating the

* See Smollet, vol. ii.

[Campaign in America. Affairs of the continent.]

ground both of its justice and necessity. In the following month, war was declared by France against Britain.

The transactions in America in the campaign of 1756 were neither advantageous nor honorable to England. The British plan was, to attack the fort of Niagara, in order to cut off the communication between Canada and Ontario; to reduce Ticonderoga and Crown Point, that the frontiers of New York might be delivered from the danger of invasion, and Great Britain might become master of lake Champlain; to detach a body of troops, by the river Kennebec, to alarm the capital of Canada; and to besiege Fort Du Quesne and other fortresses on the Ohio.* The preparations, however, were by no means adequate to such numerous and extensive objects. There was great tardiness in despatching troops from England. The earl of Loudoun, appointed commander in chief, arrived so late with his armament, that it was useless for the whole year. Thus the enemy were enabled, not only to be better provided against future attacks, but even then to act on the offensive. The French and Indians continued to molest the British settlements with impunity. Encouraged by the inactivity of the English forces, they attacked the fortress of Oswego, and made themselves masters of it, though strongly garrisoned. The earl of Loudoun, finding himself unable to act offensively that year, employed his time in preparations for beginning the following campaign early, and with great force. No action of importance distinguished the naval history this year. Single British ships took merchantmen and ships of war belonging to the enemy, but the fleets were not engaged after our retreat from Minorca. The most important acquisitions to this country were attained through privateers, which considerably distressed the enemy's trade.

In the hostilities between Britain and France, other countries now became involved. His Britannic majesty had, as we have seen, formed a treaty with Russia, in order to preserve the neutrality of Hanover, and to employ a great portion of the French forces. Circumstances, however, speedily gave a total change to this system of alliance, and effected a confederacy between the king of Britain and the Prussian Frederick, who was the opponent of Russia. These engagements, and their objects, necessarily demand a short review of the progress and state of the Prussian power under that extraordinary man, who then held the sovereignty.

In the seventeenth century, Brandenburg was a principality of little importance in the politics of Europe. Towards its close, its sovereign became an elector; and in the beginning of the last century, a king. Frederick William, the second monarch of Prussia, with a view to increase the power and importance of his kingdom, devoted his attention almost exclusively to his army. He established a military force much superior to any that had been on foot under his predecessors; and formed an army with the most perfect discipline, according to the existing rules of tactics, but far inferior in number and strength to the forces of the neighbouring potentates. Indeed, his dominions could not supply, much less maintain, a very powerful army. His soil was unfruitful, his population was scanty, his people

* See Smollet, vol. ii.

[Conflicting claims to Silesia. Maria Teresa. Kaunitz.]

were poor, and his revenue was inconsiderable. These were the narrow resources which, on the death of Frederick William, fell into the hands of his son and successor,* Frederick II. But Frederick had, in his genius and spirit, resources which supplied the political and physical wants of his kingdom : he was a man born to render a small state great.

The house of Brandenburg had ancient claims to the two principalities of Silesia, almost as great in extent, and fully equal in value, to half its dominions. The claim was in itself intricate. Austria asserted with truth, that Brandenburg had yielded Silesia for an equivalent; but Frederick denied that his predecessor possessed the power of ceding that territory ; alleging besides, that no equivalent had been received ; and that the consideration given was totally inadequate. As Austria altogether reprobated this construction of the treaty, Frederick had, on the death of the emperor Charles VI., invaded Silesia; the queen of Hungary, who was then engaged with so many enemies, and unable to defend Silesia effectually, had ceded it at last, by the treaty of Breslaw, to the Prussian king. Hostilities being again renewed between Maria Teresa and Frederick, a second peace was concluded at Dresden in 1745, in which the king of Prussia dictated the terms, and Silesia was renounced more solemnly than before. The empress-queen,† considering the valuable province of Silesia as not restored by her justice, but extorted from her weakness, had scarcely settled this peace, before she began to project schemes for its recovery. In 1746, she formed, with the court of Petersburgh, a treaty which was ostensibly defensive, but really offensive. By a secret article it was provided, that if his Prussian majesty should attack the empress-queen, the empress of Russia, or the republic of Poland, the aggression should be considered as a breach of the treaty of Dresden ; the right of the empress-queen to Silesia, ceded by that treaty, should revive ; and the contracting parties should mutually furnish an army of sixty thousand men, to re-invest the empress-queen with that duchy. Poland, without actually signing this treaty, was understood to accede to its conditions.

After the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle, the empress-queen had devoted great attention to the internal improvement of her country, especially to the increase of her military strength. This engine of power she promoted by a judicious choice of officers, liberal encouragement to her troops, and, above all, by her rare and happy talents of exciting in those who approached her person, zeal, emulation, exertion, and a resolution to encounter every risk in order to obtain her favour.‡ She rendered her army much more perfect and formidable than any force had before been under the house of Austria : and while thus making preparations at home, she was not idle abroad, she employed her utmost efforts to embroil the king of Prussia with the court of Petersburgh, and made rapid, though secret progress in her undertaking. The politics of Maria Teresa were at this time chiefly directed by count Kaunitz, who for so many years served the house of Austria with distinguished zeal and ability. Kaunitz, anxious to gratify his mistress by the recovery of Silesia, was aware that the loss

* Gillies's Frederick, p. 62.

† Francis Stephen, her husband, had been then just chosen emperor.

‡ Gillies's Frederick, p. 207.

[Endeavours to form a confederacy with France. Alliance between Britain and Prussia.]

of that province, and the aggrandizement of Frederick, had been materially promoted by the war between Austria and France. While the courts of Versailles and Berlin continued connected, it would be very difficult for the empress queen to execute her designs of humbling Frederick and exalting herself. Investigating the history and interests of Austria, Kaunitz saw that her dissensions with France, her most powerful neighbour, had been the greatest obstacle to the gratification of her ambition. He knew also that the house of Austria had been the chief obstacle on the continent to the aggrandizement of France. The French and Austrian sovereigns had been rivals from the time of Francis I. and Charles V. Kaunitz projected a sacrifice of ancient rivalry to present interest, by effecting an alliance with France. Having impressed on the empress-queen the justness and force of his views, he was sent as ambassador to the court of Versailles. Qualified by the depth of his genius for conducting any great or difficult business, he was by other qualities as well as his ministerial talents, peculiarly well fitted to acquire ascendancy at the court of France. Versatile, capable of accommodating himself to any characters or humours which it suited his purpose to conciliate, he greatly resembled a French courtier. In his taste and manners as trifling, as he was in his understanding and political views profound, he could match a Frenchman in either his frivolity or strength. Having established his influence at Versailles, he employed it in promoting his grand project of confederacy. He represented to the French ministers, "that the time was now come, when the French ought to emancipate themselves from the influence of the kings of Prussia and Sardinia, and a number of petty princes, who studiously sowed dissension between the great powers of Europe, in order to benefit themselves. Excited by their artifices, the courts of Versailles and Vienna were continually contriving schemes hostile to each other, and hurtful to both; whereas, in conformity to the rules of just policy, they ought rather to adopt such a system of public conduct, as would remove every ground of difference or jealousy, and lay the foundation for a solid and permanent peace."^{*} The novelty of this plan of politics at first appeared extravagant to the court of France, which had been long accustomed to consider the houses of Austria and Bourbon as rivals; but, on maturely weighing the propositions, they became more disposed for their reception. Besides the many continental advantages which Kaunitz from time to time stated as about to accrue from this plan, they would be able, by amity with Austria, to direct the principal part of their force against Britain.

Meanwhile, France urged the king of Prussia to assist her in invading the electorate of Hanover. King George applied to the empress-queen to send to the Low Countries a certain number of men stipulated by treaty, which she declared it was impossible for her to spare for that purpose, as she was apprehensive of the designs of the king of Prussia. Alarmed for the safety of his electorate, our king proposed to Prussia a treaty for preserving the tranquillity of Germany. Frederick thought this proposition more advisable than a renewal of the alliance with France, which was then on the eve of expiration. A treaty was accordingly concluded between Britain and Prussia on the

* See Gillies's *Frederick*, p. 209.

[Confederacy between France and Austria. Warlike preparations.]

16th of January, 1756, by which the contracting parties bound themselves* not to suffer foreign troops of any nation to enter or pass through Germany, but to secure the empire from the calamities of war, and to maintain its fundamental laws and constitutions. The court of France appeared to believe that the king of Prussia was a subordinate prince who was bound to execute the mandates of Versailles. Informed of Frederick's treaty with England, the French courtiers and ministers were so arrogant and insolent, as to charge him with defection from his ancient protector.†

Kaunitz saw that this was the proper time for obtaining the desired alliance with France, and accordingly the treaty was concluded on the 9th of May, 1756. This famous confederacy, announced as the union of the great powers, contained a mutual promise between the contracting parties, of reciprocally assisting each other with twenty-four thousand men, in case either of them should be attacked. The czarina, being applied to by the now allied powers, readily acceded to a confederation calculated to promote the projects formed between her and Maria Teresa in 1746. As the depression of the power of England was the object which France sought by her encroachments in North America, and the cause of the war between these two nations, so the depression of Prussia was the object that Austria sought through her alliances with the other great empires, which involved in war the whole continent of Europe. The elector of Saxony, (king of Poland,) though he professed neutrality, really joined in the designs against Prussia. Frederick, one part of whose policy it was to keep in pay spies at every court whose designs it imported him to know, was accurately informed, not only of the objects, but the plans of the allied potentates, and made vigorous preparations for defending himself and his kingdom.

Maria Teresa collected magazines, and assembled two armies in Bohemia and Moravia. The king of Poland under pretence of exercising his soldiers, drew together sixteen thousand men, and occupied the strong post of Pirna in Saxony. The Russians formed a camp of fifty thousand men in Livonia. Perceiving these hostile preparations, Frederick demanded categorically of the empress-queen whether she meant to keep or to violate the peace. If she meant the former, nothing would satisfy him, but a clear, formal, and positive assurance, that she had no intention of attacking him either this year or the next. He declared that he should deem an ambiguous answer a denunciation of war, and attested heaven that the empress alone would, in that event, be responsible for the blood spilt and all the dismal consequences. To this demand, requiring so short and direct an answer, a long, indirect, and evasive reply was returned by Kaunitz. The evident intention was, to compel Frederick to commence hostilities.‡ Seeing war unavoidable, the Prussian hero resolved to strike the first blow; but, before he proceeded, intimated to Maria Teresa, that he considered Kaunitz's answer as a declaration of war.

To cover Brandenburg, and carry the war into Bohemia, it was necessary to secure the command of Saxony; because, unless he be-

* Paper Office, vol. i. p. 39.

† King of Prussia's History of the Seven Years War.

‡ See Gillies's Frederick, p. 216.

[Frederick invades Saxony. Discontents in Britain.]

came master of that electorate, its sovereign might intercept the free navigation of the Elbe, cut off his intercourse with his own dominions, and discomfit his expedition. Frederick accordingly, in August, entered Upper Saxony, and took possession of Dresden the capital. He had already through his spies, procured copies of the negotiations between the king of Poland and the two imperial powers; but, wishing to manifest their designs to the world, and aware that they would declare the alleged papers to be forgeries, he was particularly anxious to find the originals. For that purpose, he carefully ransacked the Saxon archives, and at length found the desired documents.* Having thus procured the most authentic evidence of the intended partition of his dominions, Frederick published them to the world, to expose the designs of his enemies, and justify his own conduct. The Saxon army being so strongly posted at Pirna that Frederick saw it would be impossible to force their lines, he blocked them up with one division of his army, and with another marched against the Austrians, who were advancing to their relief under general Braun. He attacked them on the first of October, though greatly superior in number, at Lowositz on the left bank of the Elbe; and, completely defeating them, forced them to abandon all hopes of succouring the Saxons. Frederick, with his victorious troops, returned to the blockade of Pirna. The Saxons being in great distress for want of provisions, and now deprived of all hopes of assistance, resolved to attempt their escape; but in making the experiment, being surrounded by the Prussians, and finding it impossible to force their way through the enemy, they were compelled to lay down their arms, and surrender themselves prisoners of war. Having thus defeated the intentions of the enemy for this campaign, and the season being far advanced, Frederick placed his troops in winter quarters.

In Great Britain, the people were very much dissatisfied with the campaign 1756. The loss of Minorca, followed by the inactivity in America, excited general indignation. Addresses praying a strict inquiry into the causes of our misfortunes, were presented to parliament from all parts of the kingdom. Ministers were loudly accused, as being, by their incapacity and disunion, the sources of our disgraces and disasters. It was certain that great discord prevailed in the cabinet. Though the duke of Newcastle found it necessary to have the assistance of Mr. Fox's abilities, he by no means regarded him with confidence and favour. Mr. Fox on the other hand, far from approving the particular measures, and farther still the general conduct, of his colleagues, disdained to continue the tool of so feeble a junto, and resigned his employment. The public loudly called for sacrificing an inefficient combination to the highest individual genius, and for bringing Mr. Pitt into office. The duke of Newcastle resigned. Mr. Pitt, in November, 1756, was appointed principal secretary of state; Mr. Legge, chancellor of the exchequer; and the duke of Devonshire, first lord of the treasury.

* It was here that Frederick found the secret articles of the treaty of Petersburg, which I have already mentioned as concluded between Austria and Russia against Prussia, soon after the peace of Dresden; with a reference to a partition treaty made between the powers before that peace; which treaty of Petersburg was in effect acceded to by the king of Poland.

[Mr. Pitt appointed minister. Dissensions in the cabinet.]

His majesty desirous of making great efforts in Germany, in his speech to the house took notice of the unnatural union between France and Austria, which he considered as threatening the subversion of the empire, and the destruction of the protestant interest on the continent. He called on parliament to enable him to use effectual efforts against such pernicious designs. Soon after, Mr. Pitt delivered a message to the house, of which the substance was, "that, as the formidable preparations and vindictive designs of France were evidently bent against his majesty's electoral dominions, and the territories of his good ally the king of Prussia, his majesty confided in the zeal and affection of his faithful commons, to assist him in forming and maintaining an army of observation for the just and necessary defence of the same, and to enable him to fulfil his engagements with his Prussian majesty, for the security of the empire and the support of their common interests." In the house of commons, when the message was discussed, strong objections were made to an interference in continental politics. It was asserted, that it was neither the duty nor interest of England, to exhaust its blood and treasure in defence of Hanover; and that Austria herself, notwithstanding her recent alliance with France, would not suffer that power to acquire a permanent footing in Germany. Mr. Pitt, viewing the course of French policy, showed that the main object of France had long been the depression of England. Perceiving distant as well as immediate consequences, he contended that continental acquisitions, by increasing her power and revenue, would ultimately render her more dangerous to this country. He had disapproved of various treaties and subsidies that had been formed and granted in the present reign on account of Hanover solely, and without any advantage to Great Britain; but the treaty with the king of Prussia had for its object the balance of power, now endangered by the confederacy between France and the two empresses. Adherence to it was absolutely necessary for the security of England. Hanover was endangered on account of Britain; it was therefore just that from Britain she should receive protection. Besides by employing the forces of France in Europe, we weakened her exertions in America. Such was the reasoning by which Mr. Pitt supported the request of the message; it was received by the majority of the house with great approbation, and suitable supplies were voted.

Though parliament had shown itself eager for the vigorous prosecution of the war, and had in its votes made very liberal provisions for the year; yet there was still a want of harmony in his majesty's councils. The whig confederacy sought an exclusive direction in the administration of affairs. Mr. Pitt would not sacrifice his own opinions and measures to those of the party. The Newcastle combination was most agreeable to the king, and willing to go the greatest lengths in gratifying his electoral partialities. Mr. Pitt, in his principles and system of continental interference, considered the dignity and interest of the British crown and nation,* and not the prepossessions of the elector of Hanover.† He did not at that time conceive

* Smollet, vol. ii.

† This is a difference very evident between the continental engagements advised by Mr. Pitt, and many of those encouraged, or at least agreed to, by former

[Dismissal and re appointment of Mr. Pitt. Operations in America.]

that so great a force was necessary to act in Germany, as the king and the Newcastle interest thought requisite. Being inflexible on this subject, he and his friend and supporter Mr. Legge, were dismissed from their offices. During several months there was no regular administration. A coalition was proposed between Mr. Fox and the Newcastle party; but in the present state of public opinion it would be evidently ineffectual. The Newcastle adherents saw, that they could now only possess a share of the government by suffering the chief direction of affairs to be vested in superior ability. Numberless addresses were presented to his majesty, beseeching him to reinstate Mr. Pitt. Party spirit appeared extinguished; all voices, without one dissonant murmur, were united in his praise. Mr. Fox, in this state of circumstances, knowing it would be vain for him to contend with the general voice of the people which was eagerly and loudly soliciting the sovereign to place Pitt at the head of his councils, with much prudence and judgment advised the king to comply with the public desire. Mr. Pitt was again made principal secretary of state, and now became prime minister of England. This appointment of a chief minister is an epoch in the history of the Brunswick administration of Britain. From the accession of the house of Hanover, the highest offices of state had been uniformly held by members of the whig party. Mr. Pitt, a friend to the constitution of his country, and favourable to the genuine principles of original whigs, was not a member of any confederacy, and owed his promotion to himself only. He commanded party. His elevation manifested the power which the people never fail to possess in a free and well constituted government. Personally disagreeable to the king, unsupported by any aristocratical confederacy, he was called by the unanimous voice of the people in a situation of great danger and difficulty to be the chief manager of British affairs. His appointment was also an epoch in the history of the war; as from the time that he was firmly established in office, and his plans were put into execution, instead of disaster and disgrace, success and glory followed the British arms.

In the campaign of 1757, however, the wisdom and energy of Mr. Pitt were employed too late to operate effectually. This summer the earl of Loudoun, instead of attacking Crown Point, as had been expected, undertook an expedition to Cape Breton against Louisbourg. Admiral Holbourne arrived at Halifax on the 9th of July, with a squadron of transports for conveying the troops consisting of about twelve thousand men. Small vessels, which had been sent to examine the condition of the enemy before the armament sailed, brought the unwelcome intelligence, that ten thousand land forces, of which six thousand were regulars, were stationed at Louisbourg; that seven-

ministers, both of George II. and his father. The earl of Sunderland, sir Robert Walpole, earl Granville, and the duke of Newcastle, concluded treaties, the exclusive objects of which were, German politics, and the security of Hanover. Mr. Pitt's policy, though it embraced Hanover in its compass, yet had for its object the humiliation of France, and the prosperity of England.

* Mr. Legge was restored to his office of chancellor of the exchequer; the duke of Newcastle was again made first lord of the treasury; lord Anson was placed at the head of the admiralty; sir Robert Henley was made keeper of the great seal, in the room of Lord Hardwicke; and Mr. Fox was appointed to the subordinate, but lucrative office, of paymaster general of the army.

[Affairs of Germany. Proceedings of the duke of Cumberland.]

teen ships of the line were moored in the harbour; and that the fortress was plentifully supplied with provisions and military stores. Informed of these particulars, lord Loudoun resolved to postpone the expedition; so that in fact nothing was either effected, or even attempted, that year, by the army under his lordship's command.

While Loudoun was absent at Halifax, Montcalm, the French commander in chief, extended the enemy's possessions in the back settlements, which it had been their principal object to increase. He attacked and captured Fort William Henry on the southern shore of Lake George; and by this accession to their former advantages, the French acquired the entire command of the extensive chain of lakes that connects the two great rivers St. Lawrence and Mississippi, and that forms a grand line both of communication and division between the northern and southern parts of this vast continent. Thus, in 1757, the interests of Great Britain in North America continued to decline.

Admiral Holbourne, with fifteen sail of the line, appeared off Louisbourg; and, being re-enforced with four more, attempted to draw the French to battle; but the enemy were too cautious to venture an engagement. The English fleet, after cruising in those seas till the middle of September, was overtaken by a storm, which wrecked one of the ships, and damaged the greater number; and they returned to England in a very shattered state.

The king of Prussia, having wintered at Dresden, published a manifesto, setting forth the conduct and designs of the imperial powers and of Saxony, and asserting that he himself had proceeded on principles of self-defence. Meanwhile the combined powers were making great preparations; and France by a subsidy prevailed on the Swedes to join in the confederacy. Maria Teresa exerted herself with great zeal and success; she persuaded the empress of Russia, that the invasion of Saxony, a country guaranteed by Elizabeth, was an insult to her dignity. Besides addressing the czarina's pride, she tempted her avarice by a subsidy of two millions of crowns, and added considerable bribes to her ministers. With the Germanic body her exertions and success were similar; and it was proposed, that the electors of Brandenburg and Hanover should be put to the ban of the empire. The king of Prussia in these circumstances had recourse to his only powerful ally George II. and proposed a plan of co-operation more extensive than the British sovereign deemed necessary. George confined his plan to the defence of the eastern bank of the Weser, while Frederick wished that of the Rhine to be the principal station, as from the depth and rapidity of the river, it was much more tenable than the Weser, which was fordable in many places. An army of Germans in British pay was formed on the plan of king George, and the command intrusted to the duke of Cumberland. In July, 1757, his royal highness took the field on the eastern bank of the Weser. The French commanded by marshal d'Estrees, as Frederick had foreseen, easily passed that river, and proceeded to Munster. On the 25th of July they attacked the duke in his intrenchments at Hastenbeck, and seized one of his batteries. The hereditary prince of Brunswick,* then only twenty-one years of age, regained the battery sword in hand;

* Now duke of Brunswick.

[Convention of Cloister-seven. Expedition to the coast of France.]

and to use the words of a respectable historian, "proved, in the first exploit, that nature had formed him for a hero."^{*} At the same time, a Hanoverian colonel, with a few battalions, penetrating through a wood, attacked the French in the rear, put them to flight, and took their cannon and colours. The main body of the enemy, however, being in possession of an eminence that commanded and flanked both the lines of the infantry and the battery of the allies, the duke of Cumberland thought it impossible to dislodge them from their posts; and commanded his forces to retire towards Hamalen. Marshal d'Estrees had formed so very different an opinion of the issue of the contest, that he was actually ordering a retreat himself, when he perceived, to his great astonishment, the allied army withdrawing.† The duke having evacuated Hamalen, retreated to Nienbergh, then to Verden, and at last to Staden; and thus abandoned the whole country to the French, without any farther contest. The duke of Richelieu, successor to d'Estrees, pursued his highness, and reduced him to a distressing dilemma; before him was the ocean, on the right the Elbe, on the left the Weser, become deeper as it approached the sea; behind was the enemy. Nothing remained, but either to fight their way through the hostile force, which they considered as impossible, or to surrender themselves prisoners of war. Accordingly the duke capitulated with his whole army, and concluded the noted convention of Cloister-seven, in September, 1757. By this treaty the troops of Hesse and Brunswick were to return to their respective countries; the Hanoverians were to remain at Staden, in a district assigned them, and no mention was made of the electorate, which was occupied by the French. This unfortunate event was imputed to two errors; one in the original plan of the campaign, in choosing a weak line of defence on the Weser, instead of a strong line on the Rhine; another in the execution, by the order for retreat when there was a probable chance of victory. It was also said, that if the allied army instead of retiring to a narrow angle, had proceeded towards Prussia, they might have been easily covered by the Prussian forces. His royal highness having returned to England, and not finding his conduct received with that approbation which he expected, resigned all his military employments. The kingdom being now under the administration of Pitt, in order to cause a diversion of the French force favourable to the allies in Germany, he planned an expedition to the coast of France; and a formidable armament was equipped with surprising despatch.‡ The fleet was commanded by sir Edward Hawke, and the army by sir John Mordaunt.

On the 23d of September, the fleet anchored off the river Charente, and took the Isle of Aix, with its garrison. It was proposed to attack Rochefort. Sir Edward Hawke was eager for this measure, but sir John Mordaunt deemed it too dangerous an attempt. After continu-

* See Gillies's *Frederick*, p. 247.

† Gillies's *Frederick*, p. 247.

‡ The equipment affords an instance of the vigorous boldness and decision of the minister's character. When he ordered the fleet to be equipped, and appointed the time and place of its rendezvous, lord Anson said it would be impossible to have it prepared so soon. "It may (said Mr. Pitt) be done; and if the ships are not ready at the time specified, I shall signify your lordship's neglect to the king, and impeach you in the house of commons." This intimation produced the desired effect: the ships were ready. Belsham's *George II.* p. 428.

[Operations of the king of Prussia. Defeat of the French at Rosbach.]

ing in the river, and reconnoitring the coasts for many days, it was resolved in a council of war that they should return to England. The nation was disappointed and enraged at the failure of this expedition. All were sensible that the minister had done every thing in his power, and were perfectly satisfied with the conduct of the admiral. The blame was thrown upon the general. He was tried by a court martial and acquitted. His exculpatory sentence, however, did not alter the public opinion.

During these disasters of his ally, the king of Prussia having to contend against five great powers, was in the most perilous circumstances, which only served to display the extraordinary vigour of his genius, the wisdom of his councils, and the magnanimity of his disposition. From his winter quarters at Prague, he in the beginning of April took the field. Pretending to design only a defensive war, he fortified his camp at Dresden, and made some feeble incursions into Bohemia. The Austrian general, conceiving him to intend nothing beyond these petty enterprises, was lulled into security. Frederick ordered his troops to assemble by different routes at Prague on the 5th of May, where general Brown was posted with a considerable force. The king, knowing that his enemies expected a great reinforcement, determined to bring them to battle before fresh troops should arrive. He attacked them without delay, forced their intrenchments, and gained a complete victory.* The Austrians took refuge in Prague. Frederick summoned that city to surrender; but marshal Daun, hastening to its relief, encamped at Kolin upon the Elbe. The king of Prussia, on the 18th of June, 1757, having attacked his entrenchments, was repulsed and defeated with great loss; and in consequence of this disaster, raised the siege of Prague. If marshal Daun had been as active in pursuing, as he was skilful in obtaining his victory, he might have prevented Frederick from retreating with the remains of his troops. From Prague, the king retired into Saxony. The Austrians recovered the whole country of Bohemia, and advanced in pursuit of Frederick. Meanwhile the Russians ravaged Prussia, and the Swedes entered Pomerania. To increase the multiplied dangers of the Prussian monarch, the convention of Cloister-seven had deprived him of his only ally; and the French forces were now at liberty to direct against him their whole efforts.† This hero was always more energetic and formidable than ever, after a defeat. Instead of yielding to difficulties, he was the more strongly incited to extraordinary exertions. With a small body of men he marched against the French, and the troops of the Circles, posted at Rosbach, near Leipsic, in upper Saxony. He drew up his forces (November 5th, 1757) with such skill, that he overcame a great army. Ten thousand of the enemy were killed and wounded, and seven thousand

* Nineteen thousand were killed, and five thousand taken prisoners. The loss of the conquerors was also very considerable.

† At this time the king of Prussia thus expressed himself in a letter to his friend earl Mareschal: "What say you of this league, which has only the marquis of Brandenburg for its object? The great elector would be surprised to see his great-grand-son at war with the Russians, the Swedes, the Austrians, almost all Germany, and a hundred thousand French auxiliaries. I know not whether it will be disgrace in me to submit; but I am sure there will be no glory in vanquishing me."

[Glorious result of the campaign. North America.]

taken prisoners. Having thus overcome the French, he marched with the utmost expedition against the Austrian army, now assembled in Silesia. The Prussians had lost almost all the towns of that country, and at last Breslaw itself, the capital. Frederick, in the end of November arrived in Silesia with an army of thirty-three thousand men. He found the Austrians posted at Louthcr, being sixty thousand in number, under marshal Daun. By the mere force of military genius, he gained a complete and decisive victory, having killed or taken twenty-one thousand men.* Frederick, who knew how to use as well as to gain a victory, retook Breslaw, and recovered Silesia. In the midst of such numerous and complicated operations, Frederick's genius exerted itself in policy as well as in arms. The Russians were so powerful in Prussia, that his troops contended against them in vain. Frederick, by his emissaries, entertained a secret correspondence with Peter the Great, duke and heir apparent to the throne of Russia, who was well affected towards the Prussian king. The chancellor Bestuchew, prime-minister, in order to gratify Peter, likely soon to be his master, gave orders to the Russian troops to retire towards Poland. Marshal Lehwald, who had commanded against the Russians, freed from their formidable army, marched against the Swedes in Pomerania, defeated them and drove them out of that province. Frederick, before he went into winter quarters, reduced Leibnitz, the only fort in Silesia, and so recovered from the Austrians the whole of that province, on account of which they had begun the war. Thus did this extraordinary man, deserted by every ally, with a comparatively small number of forces, make head against the most formidable combination recorded in the annals of Europe; defeat their several armies, distinguished for valour and discipline, and commanded by the most skilful generals; dispossess them of all their acquisitions; and, though fighting against almost the whole continental force of Europe, evince his superiority over all his enemies.

The principal object of British preparations, and the chief theatre of war in 1758, was North America. The earl of Loudoun being recalled after the unsuccessful campaign of 1757, the chief command devolved on general Abercrombie. Next in authority was major-general Amherst. Admiral Boscawen having arrived early in the year, the forces, including provincials as well as regulars, amounted to no less than fifty thousand men. The generals and admiral concerted the plan of the campaign; the objects of which were, the reduction of Louisbourg, and the capture of the French line of forts. General Amherst, sailing with ten thousand men under convoy of Boscawen's fleet to cape Breton, anchored on the 2d of June in sight of Louisbourg fortress, which a few days after was regularly invested. After standing a siege of seven weeks, it was compelled to surrender on the 27th of July. Besides the conquest of the whole island, six

* Dr. Gillies, who displays great military science in his account of the engagements of Frederick, shows, that in this battle he adopted both the disposition and movements of Epaminondas at the battle of Leuctra. He directed his main attack against one part (the left wing) of the enemy's troops, and by wasting them, threw the rest into confusion. One of his evolutions was by marshal Daun mistaken for a retreat; which secured the victory to the Prussians, as a similar misapprehension of the enemy had done to the Theban hero. Gillies's Frederick, p. 262.

[Attempt on Ticonderoga. Expedition to Canada.]

ships of the line and five frigates were either taken or destroyed by the English.

General Abercrombie himself, with the main body of the army, undertook the expedition against the forts. His first attempt was against Ticonderoga, a fort situated between lakes George and Champlain, surrounded on three sides with water, and in front secured by a morass. It was defended by a breastwork and intrenchment, and garrisoned by five thousand men.* The badness of the roads had prevented the artillery from keeping pace with the army, and it was not yet arrived. Notwithstanding this material want, the general determined to attack the fort; but, though the troops behaved with great gallantry, they were repulsed with considerable loss; two thousand being killed or taken prisoners, and the number of the latter was comparatively few. The general made a hasty retreat to a camp on the southern banks of lake George. Notwithstanding his loss, being still superior in force to the enemy, his retreat was censured by military men as precipitate. It was alleged that he ought to have waited for the arrival of his artillery, and being so supplied, to have proceeded in his operations against the fort. Abercrombie detached a considerable corps under colonel Bradstreet, against Fort Frontignac, situated at the entrance of the river St. Lawrence from lake Ontario; and another body of troops against Fort Du Quesne under general Forbes. Both these expeditions were successful. Fort Du Quesne being now a British possession, was called by a British name, and thenceforward denominated Fort Pitt.

In consequence of these advantages gained by the British troops, the Indian nations between the lakes and the Ohio very readily entered into a treaty with Great Britain. Thus, notwithstanding the repulse at Ticonderoga, the campaign of 1758 in America was very advantageous to the British interest, and very honourable to the British nation; as Louisbourg had been reduced, the fortified line of communication in the back settlements broken, the Indians in consequence reconciled, the British territories freed from the danger of invasion, and the French obliged to confine themselves to a defensive plan, while this country could now project offensive operations.

Amherst, encouraged by his own successes, and the general superiority of the British arms, projected the entire conquest of Canada in one campaign. He proposed, as soon as the season should admit, with the principal army to reduce the forts from the river St. Lawrence along the lakes still in the possession of France; to send a large body of land forces, and a strong squadron of ships of war, to undertake the siege of Quebec, the capital of French America; that he himself, after reducing the forts, should besiege Montreal, sail down the river, and join the besiegers of Quebec. In July, 1759, he arrived at Ticonderoga, which, strong as it was, the enemy abandoned, and retired to Crown Point. This post they also evacuated, and the fort of Niagara was captured. The projected siege of Montreal was for this year obliged to be postponed.

The command of the forces sent to Québec was intrusted to brigadier-general Wolfe, an officer who, though young, had acquired a

* In a skirmish which took place on their march, the British army and peerage suffered a great loss by the fall of lord Howe, a young nobleman of the highest promise. He was elder brother to the late earl Howe.

[Action near Quebec and repulse of the British.]

high reputation, and had distinguished himself particularly at the capture of Louisbourg. The conquest of Cape Breton, by giving us the command of the entrance to the river St. Lawrence, enabled us to have the co-operation of ships of the line up to the very walls of Quebec. A fleet, consisting of seventeen ships of the line with frigates, accompanied by an army of eight thousand men, sailed up the river. The fleet was commanded by admiral Saunders, with admiral Holmes second in command. The next in military authority to general Wolfe were brigadiers Monckton and Townshend, elder son to the lord of that name,* and brigadier Murray, brother to lord Elibank.

On the 26th of June, the armament prepared against Canada arrived at the island of Orleans, formed by the river St. Lawrence very near its northern bank, and extending to the mouth of Quebec harbour. The town is situated at the confluence of the rivers St. Lawrence and St. Charles. It consists of an upper and lower town. The lower town is situated upon a plain along the banks of the river; the upper on a bold and lofty eminence, that runs westward behind the plain, and parallel to the river. On the east is the river St. Charles, and on the north were deep woods. The French army, under the marquis of Montcalm, was posted on the eastern bank of the river St. Charles, extending to the Montmorenci, with thick woods to the north. From the strong situation of the city, the English general was aware that nothing but a decisive victory would procure him success. He endeavoured, therefore, to induce the French to come to battle. Montcalm, able and cautious, would not relinquish his advantageous post. Wolfe, therefore, determined to attack him in his intrenchments. On the 31st of July he landed his forces, under cover of the cannon of his fleet, near the western banks of the Montmorenci, and gave orders to his troops not to advance till the whole army was formed. The British grenadiers, notwithstanding these orders, rushed on to the attack, but were soon thrown into confusion by the enemy's fire and compelled to retreat. The general advanced with the rest of the army; but the disorder occasioned by the retreat of the grenadiers entirely disconcerted the plan of the attack, and general Wolfe was obliged to repossess the river to the isle of St. Orleans. Our gallant general had, as we have already said, expected the co-operation of Amherst; but the career of that great officer, though successful, had not been so rapid as to enable him to proceed to Quebec. General Wolfe, in his despatches to England, manifested that he knew and felt the difficulties of his situation. "We have (said he) almost the whole force of Canada to oppose. In such a choice of difficulties, I own myself at a loss how to determine. The affairs of Great Britain I know to require the most vigorous measures; but the courage of a handful of brave men should be exerted only where there is some hope of a favourable event." The repulse at Montmorenci made a deep impression on the English general. He had a very high sense of honour, and an ardent desire of military fame; he was aware that men judge of conduct from the event, much oftener than from the circumstances, intentions, and plans of the agent. Inferior as his force was, destitute of the expected aid, great as was the strength of the enemy and of the country with which he had to con-

* Now marquis Townshend.

[Victory and death of Wolfe.]

tend, he well knew that if unsuccessful, he should incur censure and reproach. These considerations operated so powerfully on the susceptible mind of Wolfe, that it affected his constitution, naturally delicate and irritable, and produced a fever and dysentery. Feeble and distempered as he was, he determined either to effect his enterprise, or die in the attempt. He formed a design manifesting great boldness of conception: this was, to land his troops above the city on the northern banks of the river, at the base of the heights of Abraham which covered the town, to scale those precipices, and gain possession of the eminence in reliance on which the city was on that side but slightly fortified. Having communicated this scheme to admiral Saunders, it was concerted that they should sail up the river, and proceed several leagues farther up than the spot where they intended to land, with a design of returning down during the night. They fell down soon after it was dark (Sept. 18th,) and accomplished their disembarkation in secrecy and silence. Captain Cook, afterwards so famous as a circumnavigator, commanded the boats that were employed to land the troops. They proceeded to the precipice; colonel Howe,* with the light infantry and Highlanders,† ascended the rocks with admirable courage and activity, made themselves masters of a defile, and dislodged a guard that defended a small intrenched narrow path, by which alone our forces could reach the summit. The heroic general, regardless of the distemper which preyed on him, led up his troops, and arrayed them on the heights. With such despatch was all this achieved, that the besieged were ignorant of the attempt until it was completely effected. Montcalm being informed that the enemy had possessed these commanding heights, determined to hazard a battle, by which only he concluded the town could now be saved. He passed the river St. Charles, and advanced intrepidly to meet the English. General Wolfe, perceiving the approach of the enemy, formed his line of battle. Montcalm attempted to flank the left of the English, but was prevented by the skill and activity of brigadier Townshend, who presented a double front to the enemy. A very warm engagement took place. General Wolfe, standing in the front of his line, inspired and directed his valiant soldiers. At this time the French had begun their fire at too great a distance to do much execution. The British forces reserved their shot until the enemy were very near, and then discharged with the most terrible effect. The whole army, and each individual corps, exerted themselves with the greatest intrepidity, activity, and skill. They had just succeeded in making an impression on the centre of the enemy, when their heroic general received a wound in the wrist. Pretending not to notice this, he wrapped his handkerchief round it, and proceeded with his orders, without the smallest emotion. Advancing at the head of his grenadiers, where the charge was thickest, a ball pierced his breast. Being obliged to retire to a little distance, when his surrounding friends were in the utmost anxiety about his wound, his sole concern was about the fate of the battle. A messenger arriving, he asked, "how are our troops?" "The enemy are visibly broken." Almost faint, he reclined his head on the arm of an officer, when his faculties were aroused by the distant sound of "They fly!" Start-

* Afterwards sir William.

† The forty-second regiment.

[Ineffectual efforts of the French to recover Quebec.]

ing up he called, "Who fly?"—"The French."—"What! (said he, with exultation) do they fly already? then I die happy." So saying, he expired in the arms of victory.* Generals Monckton and Townshend, after the death of the commander in chief, continued the battle with unremitting ardour. Monckton being wounded, the command devolved upon Townshend. Though the English were greatly superior, the battle was still not completely gained. The British troops being somewhat disordered in their successful pursuit, the general marshalled them with great expedition. Montcalm having exerted every means that could be employed by a skilful general and valiant soldier to rally and animate his troops, was mortally wounded. The French fled on all sides, and the British victory was complete. Quebec capitulated to general Townshend.

Some writers have endeavoured to attribute the success of this celebrated enterprize, in a considerable degree, to accident. There were, said they, sentinels disposed along the river, who might have discovered the approach of the British troops to the precipice of Abraham, and if they had made the discovery, could have given the alarm in time to prevent success. The amount of this reasoning is that when a purpose is to be effected by despatch, secrecy, and surprise, if these be not employed, the attempt will not be successful. The success of this design was owing to its probable impracticability. The enemy were not alarmed for the safety of a post which they deemed impregnable. The sagacity of our general penetrated into their sentiments, and he formed his project on the moral certainty of their secure inattention to that quarter. His reasoning was fair and just, in the circumstances of the case: the design originated in military genius: it was a very bold, and even hazardous undertaking; but such attempts, the general history of wars, and of British wars in particular, would teach us to encourage; because, on the whole, they have been oftener successful than otherwise.

The news of this glorious victory and important acquisition excited the most lively joy in England. Every honour was bestowed on the memory of the hero who had achieved the conquest, and the warmest thanks were given to the generals and admirals who had been instrumental to its execution.

By the great and rapid successes of 1759, joined with and proceeding from the advantages of 1758, France had not only been driven from her encroachments in North America, but deprived of her most valuable original possessions. Montreal and the rest of Canada still remained under her power, after the capture of Quebec.

In the following campaign, the efforts of the French in that quarter of the globe were directed to the recapture of Quebec, which they determined to attempt early in the season, before the river should be open for the admission of the re-enforcements about to arrive from England. General Murray, then governor of that city, took every precaution to maintain so important an acquisition. As the French

* The circumstances of his death, so picturesque and glorious, naturally suggests to the historical reader a comparison with the death of Epaminondas at Mantinea, and of Gustavus Adolphus; and produced some pretty affecting poems in the English and Latin languages, both on the death of Wolfe, and its resemblance to that of the other heroes.

[Conquest of Canada. Expedition to the coast of Normandy.]

approached, being advantageously posted in the neighbourhood of Quebec, he determined, though inferior in number, to risk an engagement; hoping, through the bravery of his troops, for a success which would damp the spirits of the enemy; and knowing that, if disappointed, he could securely shelter himself in Quebec. Being unsuccessful, he retreated to that city, which was immediately invested by the enemy.

It being now the month of May, and the river open, intelligence arrived that the British fleet and troops were sailing up to Quebec. The French raised the siege with great precipitation, leaving their provisions, stores, and artillery, in the hands of the British. The governor-general of Canada now centered all his hopes in the defence of Montreal; which, concluding that it would be attacked by general Amherst, he strengthened with new fortifications; at the same time raising new levies of troops, and collecting large magazines of military stores. The English general, as the French governor apprehended, undertook the siege of Montreal; and, to facilitate his operations, reduced several small posts up the river. Having arrived at Montreal, he was soon joined by general Murray from Quebec, and invested the place in September 1760. The French governor, despairing of relief, capitulated; and all Canada surrendered to the British arms. Thus did the ambition of France, after compelling this country to go to war by its unjust aggressions in North America, during the first years of hostilities, while the convulsions of our councils prevented effectual measures on our part for its suppression, prove successful; but when dissension yielded to unanimity, when incapacity gave way to genius, when wise counsel selected for the execution of its plans the ablest agents, and prompt and decisive vigour afforded the most effectual means of execution, the ambitious enemy was not only checked, but overthrown; France was deprived of her unjust acquisitions, and bereft of her most valuable ancient territories, which but for her own aggression, she might have enjoyed unmolested. Such was the change effected during the three years that Mr. Pitt had presided at the helm of affairs; and such was our situation in America in October, 1760.

In Europe, though the first operations projected by Pitt had been unsuccessful, the disappointment was by all acknowledged not to have been owing to the want of adequate preparation, and the succeeding plans were attended with no less success than in America. Early in 1758, a new expedition was projected against the coast of France, the object of which was to destroy the maritime power of the enemy. By the latter end of May, two squadrons were ready; one consisting of eleven ships of the line, under lord Anson and sir Edward Hawke, to watch the motions of the Brest fleet; the other consisting of four ships of the line with seven frigates, commanded by commodore Richard Howe, to convoy the transports that carried the land forces, consisting of sixteen battalions, and nine troops of light horse, destined for the coast of Normandy, under the command of Charles duke of Marlborough. They sailed from Portsmouth on the 1st of June,* and landed on the 5th in Castle Bay, on the coast of Brit-

* A day, thirty-six years after, so auspicious to the naval glory of England and Howe.

[Naval transaction. Victory of admiral Boscawen.]

tany; thence they marched to St. Maloes, the principal harbour on the channel for privateers, and which greatly distressed the English trade. Finding that place too strong to be taken by assault, they contented themselves with setting fire to about a hundred sale of shipping, the greater number of them privateers, and to several magazines filled with naval stores. From the coast of Brittany they sailed across the bay towards Normandy, but were prevented by a violent storm from effecting a landing. They returned to St. Helen's to refit; and the duke of Marlborough being called to another service, general Bligh was appointed to command the land forces. In August, the armament again sailed to the coast of Normandy, and anchored before Cherbourg. This place, in the midst of the channel, well situated for protecting the commerce of France, for annoying that of England, and even for facilitating an invasion, had been strongly fortified. The English armament attacked and captured the town, destroyed the harbour and basin, (a work of much ingenuity, charge, and labour,) razed the fortifications, and took considerable quantities of ordnance, and naval and military stores. Again attempting St. Maloes, the English army met with a check at St. Cas, on which they returned to England.

The naval operations in Europe in 1758 were not decisively important, though Britain had a manifest superiority. Sir Edward Hawke and lord Anson almost annihilated the French trade on the western coasts. In the Mediterranean, admiral Osborn dispersed the French fleet off Carthage, and established the superiority of the English in that part of the world. This year the English navy was also successful in Africa. Mr. Cumming, an African merchant, of the sect of Quakers, presented to the minister a plan for the reduction of Fort Louis on the river Senegal. This project being approved a small squadron was equipped under the command of commodore Marsh. Mr. Cumming* went on board that officer's ship, in order to forward and guide the expedition. Some armed vessels that opposed the British at their entrance into the river, dispersed; and the fort and adjoining factory surrendered. In the latter end of the year, a British squadron, commanded by commodore Keppel, made an attack on the island of Goree, situated southward of the Senegal, and compelled it to surrender, notwithstanding its being defended by two forts, and batteries amounting to above a hundred pieces of cannon. During the attack, the African shores were covered by multitudes of the natives, who expressed by loud clamours, and uncouth gesticulations, their astonishment at the terrible effects of European artillery.

In 1759, greater naval preparations were made than in the former year. Admiral Boscawen, being now returned from America, was appointed to command a British fleet in the Mediterranean. The French had prepared powerful armaments both at Toulon and Brest. Boscawen blocked up the enemy's fleet at Toulon; but being obliged to return to Gibraltar to refit, the French took the opportunity of putting to sea, hoping to pass the Straits, and join the Brest fleet. Admiral Boscawen, having now refitted his damaged ships, prepared to meet the enemy. On the 18th of August, having come up with them

* Mr. Cumming defended his conduct as perfectly consonant to his religious principles, affirming himself to have been previously persuaded that it would prove a bloodless conquest.

[Admiral Hawke defeats the French fleet in Quiberon bay.]

off Cape Lagos in Portugal, he entirely defeated the hostile fleet; and four ships of the line surrendered to the British.

The French were making great preparations, with an intention as it was thought of invading either Britain or Ireland. Intelligence being received that a number of flat-bottomed boats were ready at Havre de Grace, for the purpose, as it was conceived, of landing their troops, admiral Rodney was sent, in the beginning of July, with a squadron of ships and bombs to the coast of Normandy. Anchoring in the road of Havre, he commenced the bombardment, burnt a considerable part of the town, destroyed many of their boats, and consumed a quantity of their stores.

The principal preparations, however, were making at Brest, where a formidable fleet was equipped under admiral Conflans. Against that force the chief fleet of England was directed, under sir Edward Hawke; who arrived on the coast of France before the Brest fleet had left the harbour, and blocking them up, long prevented them from sailing.

In the beginning of November, the British fleet was by stress of weather driven from the coast of France, and compelled to anchor at Torbay. The French admiral seized the opportunity of sailing from Brest, with twenty-one ships of the line and four frigates. Informed of their departure, Hawke sailed in pursuit of them, and arrived in Quiberon Bay, which the enemy had then reached. The French admiral retired close to shore, with a view to draw the English squadron among the shoals and islands, on which he expected they would be wrecked; while he himself and his officers, perfectly acquainted with the navigation of the place, could either stay and take advantage of the disaster, or, if necessary, retire through channels unknown to the British pilots. The days were now very short, the weather was extremely tempestuous, and there was the farther disadvantage of a lee-shore. Admiral Hawke, not deterred by a lee-shore even during the storms of winter, pursued, and at three in the afternoon, attacked the enemy with that adventurous boldness which has generally marked British warriors, and been so often productive of British success. Sir Edward, in the Royal George, ordered the master to bring him along side of the French admiral who commanded on board the *Soleil Royal*. The pilot remonstrated on the danger of obeying the command, as there was a great probability that they would run upon a shoal. "You have done your duty (replied the admiral) in showing the danger; now you are to comply with orders, and lay me along side of the *Soleil Royal*." The command was obeyed, and the battle became general. Four of the French ships were burnt or sunk during the action, and one was taken; the intervention of night only prevented the destruction of the whole French fleet. The next day another ship being stranded on the shoals, was burnt. This victory gave a finishing blow to the naval power of the enemy, and prevented them from making any important attempt during the remainder of the war.*

* The English, from the beginning of the war, had already taken and destroyed twenty-seven French ships of the line, and thirty-one frigates; and two of their great ships with four frigates, perished; so that their whole loss, in this particular, amounted to sixty-four, whereas the loss of Great Britain did not exceed seven sail of the line and five frigates.

[Exploits and death of Thurot.]

In 1760, admirals Hawke and Boscawen were alternately stationed in Quiberon Bay and the adjacent coasts, thereby employing a great body of French forces, under the idea that an invasion was intended; and several advantages were gained. Admiral Rodney destroyed a considerable quantity of shipping, both mercantile and warlike; but as the enemy had only an inconsiderable fleet, no important exploit was achieved in those seas. The most noted enterprises in the channel, or adjacent oceans, in the year 1760, were those in which the famous Thurot headed the army. This bold and enterprising adventurer, in the beginning of the war, had been master of a Dunkirk privateer. In 1758, he had with his ship* done great execution in the north seas; had taken numbers of merchantmen; and had once maintained an obstinate engagement against two English frigates, and compelled them to desist from their attack. Becoming known to the court of Versailles, he was, in 1759, employed to command a small armament, fitting out in the harbour of Dunkirk. Toward the end of that year he sailed, designing to invade Scotland or Ireland, as opportunity might serve. Commodore Boys pursued him to the north seas, but was obliged to put into Leith for a supply of provisions, during which time Thurot escaped his reach. Being overtaken by a storm, he parted company with one of his thirty gun ships, and was driven into Bergen, where he was detained by stress of weather nineteen days; after which time he sailed for the western islands of Scotland, with a view to proceed to the north of Ireland. The weather, however, again becoming stormy, he parted from his twenty-four gun ship; and being entreated by his officers to return with his now diminished force, declared that he would not again show himself in France until he had struck some blow for the service of his country. Landing in the island of Isla, one of the Hebrides, he behaved with much moderation and generosity, paying a fair price for cattle and other provisions which he found there. Meanwhile this adventurer had alarmed all the coasts of Britain and Ireland. Regular troops and militia were posted in various places, where it was thought that he would most probably attempt a landing. Commodore Boys pursued him round the Orkneys, while ships of war were ordered to scour St. George's Channel, in order to intercept his return. In February, 1760, sailing from Isla, he proceeded to the bay of Carrickfergus. On the 21st of that month, he effected a landing, and attacked the town, which colonel Jennings, with a force greatly inferior, defended with intrepidity and skill, and made an obstinate resistance; and even after the enemy had taken one part of the town, continued to defend the remainder,† but was at last obliged to yield to the force of the enemy. He surrendered by capitulation, by which he preserved the castle from attack. Mean-

* Called the Belleisle, and carrying forty four guns.

† The following note, which I transcribe from Smollet's history, will, I doubt not, be acceptable to my readers, as a striking instance of the union of courage and humanity. "While the French and English were hotly engaged in one of the streets, a little child ran playfully between them, having no idea of the danger to which it was exposed: a common soldier of the enemy, perceiving the life of this poor innocent at stake, grounded his piece, advanced deliberately between the lines of the fire, took up the child in his arms, and conveyed it to a place of safety; then, returning to his place, resumed his musket, and renewed his hostility."

[Operations in the West and East Indies.]

while the militia assembling from all the neighbouring districts, Thurot found it necessary to depart.

At this time, captain John Elliot, a young officer who had already greatly distinguished himself by acts of valour, having sailed from Kinsale with three frigates, was on his way to meet Thurot. On the 28th of February he descried him off the Isle of Man, and immediately gave signal for battle, in which Thurot very readily engaged. Both sides fought very valiantly, but the Britons carried the day. The adventurous hero was killed, and his ship surrendered themselves to the conquerors. The name of Thurot had become so terrible to merchants, that the defeat and capture of his squadron were celebrated with as hearty rejoicings as the most important victory could have produced.

The West Indies, at the commencement of the war, had been but little attended to by an administration, equally narrow in its views as feeble in its resolutions. Commodore Frankland had been sent, in 1755, with four ships of the line; and admiral Coates had, in the beginning of 1757, taken the command: but nothing material had been done. Toward the end of 1757, a British squadron, much inferior to the French in point of force, engaged them off Cape François, and forced them to retreat in a scattered condition. Several other actions took place, but these were unimportant in the result.

The comprehensive genius of Mr. Pitt was directed with vigour, and effect, not to a part, but to the whole interests of his country. He attacked the enemy in every quarter where they could be annoyed by attack. He proposed, in 1758, to send an expedition against the French settlements in the West Indies, and a strong armament was equipped under general Hobson and commodore Moore, who commanded the land and sea forces. They arrived in the West Indies at the latter end of 1758. Martinico was the first object of their destination; but, finding that island very strongly defended, they proceeded to Guadaloupe, thirty leagues to the westward. Arriving there on the 23d of January, they made a general attack upon the citadel, the town, and the various batteries by which it was defended. The enemy made an obstinate resistance; but their cannon being at last silenced, the British troops were enabled to land; on which the French abandoned the town and its fortifications. In the interior parts of Guadaloupe, a vigorous resistance was made, but at length proved ineffectual. The whole island was conquered, and the neighbouring islands of Desadea and Marigalante surrendered themselves to the British arms. Though, in 1760, the operations of Britain in the West Indies were not so splendid as in the preceding year, they were far from being unimportant. A dangerous insurrection took place among the slaves in Jamaica, which was suppressed, not without great difficulty. The British completely protected the trade of their country, annoyed that of the enemy, and destroyed or took numbers of French privateers, and several ships of war. On the whole, they had in that quarter gained valuable acquisitions from the enemy, and so completely established their superiority, as to have paved the way for future conquest.

The same general policy which directed France to her encroachments in America, had also extended to India; but, that we may have a clear view of the operations and events in that quarter, it is neces-

[Designs and proceedings of the French in the East Indies.]

sary to consider the state of our settlements and those of the French at the time when our narrative begins. Immense have been the accessions to British power and influence in that country, during the period of which our history treats; but of both progress and results we can judge only by first taking a view of the outset.

At the conclusion of the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle, the possessions of the English in India were merely commercial factories, guarded by forts near the sea-coast, or on the great navigable rivers. They had penetrated very little into the interior parts of the country, except on the banks of the Ganges. At this time, England had, on the Malabar, or western coast of the peninsula, possessed Surat, at no great distance from the mouth of the Indus, and the most northern settlement on that coast. Proceeding southward, their next factory was Bombay, situated on a small island. After that came Tillicherry fifteen leagues from which was Calicut. The last and most southern settlement which they possessed on the Malabar coast, was Anjengo. Doubling Cape Comorin, and coming to the coast of Coromandel, the first English establishment that met the sailor, was Fort St David's. Farther to the northward, was the principal possession on the eastern coast, Fort St. George, called Madras, from its contiguity to that city, which, with several villages in the vicinity, was purchased in the last century, by the East India company from the king of Golconda. Still farther to the northward, was the chief British settlement in India, Fort William, close to the town of Calcutta, situated in the kingdom of Bengal, on the Hoogley, a branch of the Ganges. Besides these settlements, the English had several interior factories for the purposes of trade, which were secured by forts. They had also settlements at Bencoolen, and other parts of India beyond the Ganges.

The principal French possession was the city of Pondicherry, on the Coromandel coast, between Forts St. David and St. George. This was a large and populous town. On the Malabar coast they had also established factories at Surat and Calicut, and at Rajapore. On the Ganges they had a factory at Chandernagore, above Calcutta.

When peace was concluded at Aix-la-Chapelle, M. Dupleix was the French governor-general in India. He was a man of great ability and soaring ambition, who projected the establishment of the empire of France in Hindostan. For that purpose he embraced the same policy which had been adopted by his countrymen in America, of stirring up the natives against the British settlers. All the provinces and kingdoms of Hindostan had belonged to the empire of the mogul; but his power had been so much reduced by Kouli Khan, that he was not able to assert his former authority over such extensive dominions. The princes that had been tributary, and even the subahs and nabobs, who had been governors appointed by him, his own officers and servants, now refused to acknowledge his superiority, and asserted their independent supremacy over their respective territories. These princes or chieftains very often quarrelled with one another, and naturally solicited the assistance of European settlers in their neighbourhood; while the Europeans, on the other hand, endeavoured to interest the native princes in their contests. Dupleix seeing that they might be useful tools in the execution of his project, paid great court to these chiefs, especially such of them as showed themselves bold and unprincipled adventurers. Nizam Amuluck, the subah or viceroy of Decan, having officially the

[Colonel Clive. Capture of Calcutta. Black Hole prison.]

appointment of a nabob or governor of Arcot, had nominated Anaverdi khan to that office. The viceroy dying, was succeeded by his son Nazirzing, whom the mogul confirmed. Between the subah and the English at Fort St. George, there was an amicable intercourse. Dupleix supported a pretender to the office, Muza Pherzing, cousin to the other; and found means to engage Chunda Saib, an enterprising adventurer, in favour of the pretender, against the legally constituted viceroy.* A body of English troops advanced; the French, afraid of an engagement, retired. The pretender, abandoned by his own army, threw himself on the mercy of his cousin, who spared his life, but for his own security kept him in confinement. Dupleix, disappointed in his project of raising by his own force an usurper who would be subservient to his designs, formed a conspiracy against the viceroy's life. The chief conspirators were his prime minister and two of his nabobs. Encouraged and stimulated by the Frenchman, they murdered their master, and, releasing the cousin, proclaimed him viceroy of Decan. The usurper associated M. Dupleix with himself in the government. In the tents of the murdered viceroy they found an immense treasure, of which a great share fell to Dupleix, the promoter of the crime. The usurping colleagues in the vicerealty attacked the nabob of Arcot, who was legally appointed by the royal viceroy, and under the protection of the English presidency at Madras. They dispossessed him of his government, and appointed Chunda Saib, their own agent, nabob of Arcot. The English, considering these proceedings as an aggression on their ally, and as tending to raise the French influence to a very dangerous height, sent a considerable force to repel the usurper and his French auxiliaries. The British troops were commanded by the celebrated Clive. This gentleman had entered into the service of the East India company as a writer; but being formed for more arduous situations, and desirous of a military life, he had offered his services in that capacity, and was employed to command in this expedition. With such resolution, secrecy, and despatch, did he proceed, that the enemy knew nothing of his approach until he was actually before their capital; and the capture of Arcot, an important acquisition to the British interest, was farther memorable, from being the first occasion in which Clive displayed his extraordinary talents. Meanwhile, the usurper of the Decan having been murdered, Sallabah Sing, the younger of the two brothers of the former viceroy, was proclaimed by M. Dupleix, in opposition to the elder, who had been appointed by the mogul, and supported by the English. The usurper, finding means to cut off his brother by poison, and, considering himself as undoubted viceroy, made a grant to M. Dupleix, of all the English possessions north from Pondicherry, consequently including Madras. Dupleix was, in 1753, preparing to avail himself of this grant, when he was recalled to Europe, and a successor appointed. *Sieur Godeheu*, the new French governor, being of a less daring character than Dupleix, did not venture to carry his designs into execution, but proceeded more secretly against the English interest, by stimulating the native princes to hostilities. While he was pursuing these measures, he professed the most pacific intentions, and even concluded a provincial treaty with the presidency of Madras. War, however, soon commenced in the Carnatic; and there the English, commanded by general Stringer Lawrence, were on the whole success-

* See Smollet's Continuation, vol. ii.

[Colonel Clive restores the British interest.]

ful. But a severe blow was struck against them in another quarter of India, a blow which may be traced to the artifices and intrigues of the French. Alli Verdi Khan, subah of Bengal, Bahar, and Orissa, a man of great abilities, having died in April, 1756, was succeeded by his adopted son, Sou Rajah Dowla, a young man weak in his understanding, violent in his passions, and profligate in his morals. The old viceroy on his death-bed had exhorted Dowla to bend his principal attention to the reduction of the English. Impressed with these ideas, the young subah, soon after his accession, marched to Calcutta, and summoned the fort and city to surrender. Mr. Holwell, the governor, with a few officers, and a very feeble garrison, maintained the city and fort with uncommon resolution and courage, against several attacks, until he was overpowered by numbers, and the enemy had forced their way into the castle. He then submitted, the subah having promised, on the word of a soldier, that no injury should be done to him or his garrison. Nevertheless, they were all driven, to the number of a hundred and forty-six persons of both sexes, into a place called the Black Hole prison, a cube of about eighteen feet, in which there was hardly any current of air. Here they were exposed to a scene of as cruel distress as can be conceived; most of them died in the greatest agony, but Mr. Holwell and a few others came out alive.

Colonel Clive was at this time employed in the company's service in another part of India. On the Malabar coast, he and admiral Watson reduced Angria, a piratical prince, who had been extremely formidable to all those countries. Returning in triumph to Madras, they concerted measures for the restoration of the British affairs in Bengal. On the first of January, 1757, the company's armament arrived off Calcutta. The admiral with two ships, attacked the town, and though opposed by the enemy's batteries, in two hours silenced their guns; on which, as fast as possible, they abandoned the place and fort. Colonel Clive attacked the town in another quarter, and by his intrepid conduct facilitated the reduction of the settlement. Soon after he attacked and took Hoogley, a city of great trade, and containing immense stores, magazines, and riches, belonging to the subah. The viceroy of Bengal advanced with an army of 20,000 horse and 15,000 foot, being resolved to expel the English out of his dominions. On the 2d of February, he arrived opposite the English camp, within a mile of Calcutta. Clive, being re-enforced from the fleet, drew up his army and attacked the enemy so vigorously, that the viceroy retreated with the loss of a thousand men killed or taken prisoners, and a great number of horses with all their spoils. Intimidated by his defeat, the viceroy, on the 9th of February, made a peace, the general principle of which was, that the factories and possessions taken from the English company should be restored; that their losses should be completely compensated; that whatever rights and privileges had in any former time been granted by the mogul, should be confirmed and established for the future; and that the English should have the liberty to fortify Calcutta in any manner which they should judge expedient. Having concluded this treaty with the viceroy, colonel Clive and admiral Watson turned their victorious arms against the French, and attacked their fortress and factory at Chandernagore, situated farther up the Ganges than Calcutta, strongly fortified, and the most important settlement of the French at Bengal. It was garrisoned by five hundred Europeans and twelve

[Treachery of the viceroy. He is defeated at Plassey.]

hundred natives. Clive, now re-enforced by troops from Bombay, invested the place on the land side; admirals Watson and Pococke attacked it on the Ganges; their united efforts soon compelled the enemy to submit, and the place was surrendered. The ammunition, stores, effects, and money found in Chandernagore, were very considerable; but the chief advantage of the conquest arose from depriving the enemy of their principal settlement on the Ganges, which had greatly interfered with the English commerce on that river. The viceroy was far from being pleased with the progress of the English. He indeed discovered a great partiality towards the French, and evidently showed an intention of joining them as soon as he should be prepared for hostilities. He evaded the performance of the articles of the treaty which he had so lately signed, and concerted with French agents to attack the English, while they promised him the assistance of such a body of European troops as would enable him to drive them out of his vicinity. Mr. Watts, a man of ability, was then English resident at the viceroy's court, and possessed considerable influence with the subah's ministers. He not only learned, and was able to communicate to the council of Calcutta, the intentions of the subah, but found means to form a party against him in his own country. The subah, by all the arrogant insolence of a mean and despicable mind in high power, had provoked the enmity of the chief men in his court and army. A plan was concerted for depriving him of his power, and conducted by Meer Jaffier Alli Khan, his near ally by marriage, prime minister and chief commander of the army. The project being communicated to Mr. Watts, he sent intelligence of it to the company, and by the company's authority concluded a treaty with the malcontents for depriving Dowlah of a power which he was trying to render destructive to the English interest. Colonel Clive, strongly urged by Jaffier, took the field to assist the malcontents. The English commander, with a handful of troops, began his march. Crossing the Ganges, he advanced to Plassey, within one day's march of Moorshedabad, the capital of Bengal. There he found the viceroy encamped with seventy thousand men, in all the feeble magnificence which eastern effeminacy has in all ages brought against European hardness, courage, and resources of intellect. The elephants, with their scarlet housings, the rich and variegated embroidery of their tents and standards, the glittering parade and costly decorations of their cavalry, their gilded canopies, equalled any of the pageantry which a Persian satrap or king, ever brought against the wisdom, strength, or valour, of Greece or Macedon. The subah, as weak and timid in difficulty and danger, as insolent and overbearing in safety and prosperity, now courted the forgiveness and friendship of Meer Jaffier: and believing that he had prevailed, gave him the command of his left wing. Colonel Clive, with about three thousand two hundred men, advanced against more than twenty times that number. Jaffier took no part whatever in the action; the rest of the Indian troops were completely defeated with the loss on the side of the conquerors of only seventy men. Colonel Clive, with wise policy, forbearing to express any resentment against the part which Jaffier from indecision and double treachery had acted, saw that he would be a useful tool in the hands of England. He saluted him subah of the three provinces, and exhorted him to pursue his march to Moorshedabad, engaging to follow him immediately with

[Revolution in Bengal. Operations of M. Lally.]

his army. Arriving at the capital, colonel Clive deposed Surajah Dowlah, and with great solemnity substituted in his place Jaffier, who was publicly acknowledged by the people as viceroy of the provinces of Bengal, Bahar, and Orissa. Jaffier put to death his predecessor, and granted to his allies and supporters, the English, all the conditions on compliance with which they granted his vice-royalty. He paid into the treasury of the company, a crore of rupees,* as an indemnification for their losses at Calcutta, and ceded to them a considerable territory, in the vicinity of that city. Thus, in the space of fourteen days, a great revolution was effected, and the command of a country superior in extent, fruitfulness, riches, and population, to most European kingdoms, was, by a handful of troops, who were headed by an officer bred to a civil profession and not instructed in the art of war, transferred to a company of merchants residing in one of the most remote corners of the globe. Thus ended the war with Surajah Dowlah, in which the viceroy of Bengal was not only the aggressor, but had to the utmost extent of his power, perpetrated the most atrocious cruelties. The subsequent conduct of Clive was necessary to procure justice to his injured country. After the subah had concluded a peace, which restored to the English their rights, and indemnified them for their wrongs, he immediately entered into a concert with their enemies for violating the peace, and depriving them of their long established possessions and privileges; but being as weak as wicked, he fell a sacrifice to his own ill conducted villany.

While the northern provinces of India engrossed the principal attention of the company's council and officers, the French took advantage of the temporary absence of their forces from the coast of Coromandel, and attacked Ingeram, Vizagapatam, and other settlements in that quarter.

In 1758, large re-enforcements arrived under M. Lally, with a strong squadron under M. d'Apche, and the enemy projected the entire conquest of the English possessions on that coast. They invested Fort St. David's in the south part of the Carnatic, and, before an English force could arrive to its assistance, compelled it to surrender. Lally also attacked Tanjore, because the rajah had distinguished himself as the zealous and faithful ally of the English. The French general demanded of him a sum of money which would have amounted to 810,000*l*. Being refused, he invested the city; but the rajah's native troops, assisted by British engineers, made so vigorous a defence, that the French general was repulsed with loss, and obliged to raise the siege. Retreating northwards from Tanjore, he took possession of the city of Arcot, and made preparations for the siege of Madras. The English were at this time so much surpassed in land force, that during the remainder of the campaign they acted on the defensive.

The same year admiral Pococke succeeded to the command of the British fleets in India, on the death of admiral Watson. On the 26th of March, he came up with the enemy's ships in the road of Fort St. David's, and attacked them in the afternoon. D'Apche having fought warmly for two hours, in the evening retreated. The misbehaviour

* A rupee is about 2*s*. 6*d*.; a lack is 100,000 rupees, that is about 12,500*l*.: a crore is a hundred lacks: consequently, 1,250,000*l*.

[Naval engagement. M. Lally defeated by colonel Coote.]

of three of his captains* prevented Pococke from a successful pursuit. The next day he learned, that the enemy had lost a ship of the line, which had been damaged in the engagement. About five hundred of the enemy were killed or wounded, and scarcely one hundred of the English. This was the first action ever fought between a British and French fleet in the Indian seas; and, notwithstanding the disadvantages under which admiral Pococke laboured, it was auspicious to England.

Admiral Pococke having gone into harbour, to repair the damage incurred by his fleet, as soon as he was refitted, set sail again in quest of the enemy. Having cruised for several weeks, he found them on the 27th of July at anchor in Pondicherry road. On descriing the English fleet, the French unmoored and fled, Pococke closely pursuing the enemy, could not come up with them till the 3d of August, when having obtained the weather-gage, he bore down on them in order of battle. The engagement began with great fury on both sides; but in a short time the French retreated toward Pondicherry. Night intervening, they escaped; but their ships were so much damaged, that they were obliged to sail to the Mauritius to refit, and thus leave to England the sovereignty of the Indian seas.

But the completion of British victory over the French in India was reserved for the glorious 1759. In the month of December, 1758, Lally began his march towards Madras, and in the beginning of January commenced the investment of that important fortress. The besieged, though inferior to him in strength, made a gallant defence. The event was for some weeks doubtful; but a considerable reinforcement of troops and stores arriving, conducted by captain Kempenfelt, M. Lally raised the siege, and retreated to Arcot, extremely chagrined at his ill success.

About the same time a detachment under colonel Ford dispossessed the French of Vizagapatam, and Masulipatam. The subah of the Decan, who had been favourable to the French as long as they appeared superior, finding the English now so powerful in his neighborhood, proposed a treaty to the government of Madras. An alliance was accordingly concluded, by which he renounced all connexion with France, and ceded the entire circar of Masulipatam to the company; who on their part, engaged not to assist or countenance the subah's enemies.

Colonel Coote now commanded the English forces in the Carnatic, and, being able to act on the offensive, proceeded against Lally. Having gained several advantages over the enemy, he endeavoured to bring him to a general engagement, which he effected at Wandwalsh. In this battle† the English gained a great and important victory, which decided the fate of French India on the Coromandel coast. Lally, with the remainder of his troops, retired to Pondicherry. The British general recovered Arcot; and, except Pondicherry, the French had no settlement of any importance in the Carnatic.

* Two of the English captains being tried, were dismissed the service; and the third was deprived of his rank as post captain for one year.

† From the detail of this engagement, to be found in Smollet, it appears, that great valour was displayed on both sides; but that the French general was rash and impetuous; and that the victory of the English was owing to colonel Coote's superior skill.

[Transactions in Europe. Operations of prince Ferdinand.]

The conquest of Arcot finished the campaign.* Admiral Pococke, during the same campaign, again defeated the French and compelled them to leave those seas. On the Malabar coast, a squadron of English, under captain Richard Maitland, made themselves masters of the factory of Surat.

Thus we have seen French aggression, after being for a time successful, rousing British energy, and producing British victory; we have seen her attempts to exalt herself by humbling England, lead to her own humiliation, and the aggrandizement of her rival; and we have seen her unjust and unwarrantable ambition discomfited. Such was the state of affairs where Britain was engaged for herself solely; we must now follow her to her co-operation with allies. We left Frederick in winter quarters, after the campaign of 1757, that glorious era in his history. In England, the king of Prussia, since the dissolution of his political connexion with France, and his alliance with this country, had become a very popular character. This predilection rose to enthusiasm, on his gaining the victory at Rosebach over the ancient enemy of Britain. The union of the two catholic powers was by many considered as a confederacy to oppress and subvert the protestant interest of Germany. The English applauded and extolled Frederick as the protestant hero, and anxious for his success, were willing to contribute towards his support and defence. Mr. Pitt, having taken a view of the state of affairs on the continent, as well as the whole operations of the year, saw that the strenuous efforts of Britain were necessary to preserve the balance of power; and that exertions in Germany, by employing the strength of France in that quarter, would weaken her operations in America. He therefore proposed, that a strong army should co-operate with the king of Prussia in Germany in the ensuing campaign. A subsidiary treaty was concluded, by which the king of England stipulated to pay into the hands of his Prussian majesty, the annual sum of 670,000*l.* to be employed at his discretion for the good of the common cause; and parliament cheerfully voted the necessary supplies for that object, and other purposes of the war.

The convention of Cloister-seven was considered as a disgrace to the nation, and also as infringed by the subsequent conduct of the French in Hanover. The army, which had been dispersed by that treaty, was re-assembled in British pay, and the command, by the advice of Mr. Pitt, bestowed on prince Ferdinand of Brunswick; whose object in the campaign of 1758 was to drive eighty thousand French troops from Lower Saxony and Westphalia. His own forces at the beginning of the campaign consisted of only thirty thousand Hanoverians, but they were afterwards joined by the troops of Hesse-Cassel and Brunswick, whom England engaged by subsidies to assist in the deliverance of Germany. The plan of operations concerted with Frederick was, to compel the enemy to evacuate Brunswick and Hanover, through the fear of having their communication with the Rhine intercepted. For these purposes he sent in March two detachments to the Weser, of which one gained possession of Verden, the other, under the command of his nephew, the hereditary prince, took pos-

* The campaign somewhat exceeded the boundaries of 1759, Arcot being taken in the beginning of February, 1760.

[Battle of Crevelt. Exploits of Frederick.]

session of the strong and important post of Floyer. In April, prince Ferdinand himself, crossing the Aller, advanced south towards Brunswick, assisted by a detachment of Prussian troops under prince Henry, the king's brother. M. Clermont, who had succeeded Richelieu in the command of the French forces, apprehensive of being cut off from his intercourse with the Rhine evacuated Brunswick, Wolfenbüttel, and Hanover, and marched to Westphalia. Crossing the Weser, Ferdinand besieged Minden, and took it in sight of the enemy's army. Count Clermont now retreated towards the Rhine; repassed it at Wesel in May; and stationed the army on the left bank of the river, after having lost a number of his troops, which were taken in the retreat. Ferdinand would not suffer them to remain undisturbed within the boundaries of Germany. In June, he attacked them at Crevelt near Cleves, and gained a victory more glorious to his military character than decisive in its consequences. The prince of Soubise, who commanded a considerable body of French, having defeated a detachment of Hessians, Ferdinand was obliged to act on the defensive, and the affairs of France began to wear a more favourable aspect. In July, twelve thousand British troops arriving from England under the command of the duke of Marlborough to re-enforce the allies, Ferdinand now resumed his offensive operations. Through his judicious, well planned, and well executed movements, he completely effected the object of the campaign, by driving the French out of Lower Saxony and Westphalia.*

The king of Prussia now endeavored to make the utmost advantage of the victories which he had gained at the close of the preceding campaign. Of Silesia, the fortress of Schweidnitz alone remained in the hands of Austria. This place, which was blockaded during winter, on the return of spring he attacked by a regular siege. Commencing his works on the 2d of April, he on the 15th carried the garrison by assault. Having thus completely recovered Silesia, he invaded Moravia, and besieged Olmutz its capital; but having opened the trenches at too great a distance from the town, he spent his time and ammunition uselessly; and count Daun arriving, obliged him to raise the siege. Meanwhile the Russians and Cossacks had invaded Brandenburg, and were committing the most barbarous ravages. Their army being divided into two parts, it was Frederick's object to come between them, so as to cut off their communication with each other. In this design he succeeded; and was able to bring Romanzow, with the principal division, to battle at Kustrin.† The ready genius of the Prussian king, on perceiving the disposition of the Russian troops, formed his men in such a way, as to bear with his artillery on their thick mass, and prevent the parts of their army from supporting each other. Success followed his attempt; he gained a most decisive victory; and the loss of the enemy amounted to 17,000 men, with a great quantity of cannon and stores: the loss on the side of the Prussians amounted to about twelve hundred men. Having thus freed his country from the danger of the Russians, he hastened against the Austrians under marshal Daun. On the 14th of October, he was surprised by that general at Hochkirchin;‡ suffered a defeat,

* Smollet, vol. ii.

† Giles.

‡ Smollet.

[Defeat of the French at Minden. Losses of the king of Prussia.]

but not decisive; acted with such ability, as to prevent the enemy from deriving any material advantage from a victory; and ultimately compelled Daun to retire into Bohemia. The Russians and Swedes were also obliged to withdraw to Stralsund.

In 1759, prince Ferdinand took the field against the French, who had again invaded Westphalia in great force, under Messrs. De Contades and Broglie. Prince Ferdinand, in July, found them posted at Minden. The prince thinking the enemy too strongly posted to render an attack by him wise, took a position at some distance, hoping to provoke them to commence an assault, which he was well prepared to resist. The French generals very imprudently left their own strong posts to attack prince Ferdinand. The battle began at dawn, and was fought with great impetuosity on both sides till noon; when the vigour, firmness, and courage of the English INFANTRY determined the fate of the day, and gained a complete victory. The British *cavalry*, commanded by lord George Sackville, were ordered to advance, and bear down upon the enemy when routed and flying. *They did not advance, and were of no service in the battle.** The same day, the hereditary prince of Brunswick, who was fast rising to military eminence, having been sent by his uncle against a detachment of French at Gofeldt with six thousand men, defeated twice that number of the enemy, killed three thousand and took as many prisoners. These successes enabled Ferdinand to drive the French a second time out of Germany, and to leave the allies in possession of every province and town which belonged to them at the declaration of war.

The campaign of 1759 was far from being equally prosperous to the Prussian monarch. Besides the formidable enemies that he had to encounter abroad, he was distracted at home by dissensions among his generals. It was the object of the Austrians and Russians, who had before fought separately, to form a junction this campaign. Frederick's first purpose was, to prevent this junction, and to attack one division before they could be supported by another; but the disorders among the generals prevented them from acting with their usual skill and alacrity. The Prussians were defeated, on the 23d of June, at Kay, on the Oder, with the loss of more than four thousand men. This disaster disconcerted the king's measures, and was the prelude to a much greater defeat. The Austrians and Russians, soon after this battle, joined their forces and encamped at Kundersdorf, near Frankfort on the Oder. On the 12th of August, the king of Prussia attacked the enemy, and had almost succeeded in defeating the Russians, when the intervention of marshal Loudohn and the Austrian army gave a fatal turn to affairs. Notwithstanding the extraordinary efforts of the king, who exposed himself in the most dangerous parts of the field, had two horses shot under him, and his clothes rent by musket balls, the Prussians were completely defeated and dispersed; the approach of night saved their army from total ruin.†

* His lordship's conduct on this occasion underwent an inquiry and a trial. He alleged in his defence, that contradictory orders had been sent. This allegation, however, was not made out to the satisfaction of the court; the issue was, that he was declared unfit for serving his majesty in a military capacity.

† The king finding the defeat inevitable, sent a letter to the queen in these

[French invade Germany. Masterly policy of Frederick.]

The pressure of calamity served only to increase the elastic force of Frederick's genius. He recruited his army with indefatigable diligence, replaced his artillery from the arsenal of Berlin, and soon found himself at the head of a considerable body of troops. But the jealousies between the Russians and Austrians concurred with the active ability of Frederick. When Daun proposed to pursue the enemy, the Russian general would not consent; and the time was wasted without any important effort, until winter gave the Prussian monarch some respite for restoring his affairs.

In 1760, the court of Versailles made great preparations for recovering their footing in Westphalia. The hereditary prince, in April, having assailed the count de Germain too adventurously, was repulsed; but afterwards, on the 16th of July, attacked a numerous body of the enemy at Exdorf, and gained a brilliant victory; five battalions were taken prisoners, with their arms, baggage and artillery.* On the 31st of the same month, prince Ferdinand, with the main army, had an engagement with the French near Cassel, in which the enemy were compelled to retreat. The hereditary prince was afterwards defeated near Camper, but by a masterly retreat was able to rejoin the main army. The successes of that campaign towards the close were very various, but on the whole it was not favourable to the allies, as the French had again got possession of a great part of Westphalia, and the whole principality of Hesse.

The king of Prussia strained every nerve to compensate the losses of the preceding year, and so distributed his forces as to oppose the Russians, Swedes and Austrians, in separate divisions; while the Russians, on the other hand, attempted to join the Austrians in Silesia. Frederick used every art to animate and inspire his troops; he addressed himself to their superstition, credulity, and every other principle by which wise policy could operate upon vulgar minds: thus inspired, they took the field. The king found means to combine attack and defence. While protecting Silesia, he invested Dresden; but the approach of Marshal Daun obliged him to raise the siege of that city; and the enemy also took Glatz, in Silesia. The king found it necessary now to resort to Silesia in person, to maintain his interest in that long contested province; with his usual dexterity, he separated two divisions of the Austrian army, and kept such positions that it was impossible for them to surround his forces. He changed his movements and posts so often, that he kept the enemy always on the watch; and determined to attack them himself, as soon as he should, by marches and countermarches, draw the one division to too great a distance from the other to receive from it any support. Before him was marshal Daun with one army; behind him, Loudohn with another; and he was informed by his spies, that a third army of Russians had crossed the Oder and joined Daun. Daun being reinforced by the Russians, on the evening of the 14th of August prepared to give the king of Prussia battle. Next day his majesty de-

terms: "Remove from Berlin with the royal family; let the archives be carried to Potsdam: the town may make conditions with the enemy."—*Gillies*.

* Elliot's regiment of light horse appeared for the first time in the field upon this occasion; and, to the astonishment of the veteran troops, charged five different times, and broke through the enemy at every charge. See *Behnam's History of Great Britain*, vol. ii. p. 478.

[Successive defeats of the Austrians. Retreat of the Russians.]

camped at night with his army, and crossed the Oder towards general Loudohn. Frederick took possession of an advantageous ground, which he justly concluded Loudohn would wish to occupy. Loudohn advancing, and perceiving that there were troops posted there, supposed that it was but a small detachment, and that the main army of Prussia was in camp at Lignitz. Proceeding to dislodge the fancied detachment, he suddenly found himself attacked by the whole Prussian army. The darkness of the night, and the surprise, rendered the defeat inevitable and complete: 10,000 Austrians were slain, and 6,000 taken prisoners. In the camp at Lignitz, Frederick had left some hussars, who imitated the noise of patrols and sentinels. Daun, not doubting that he should in the morning find the Prussians where they had been in the evening, marched towards the camp; but to his utter surprise, he found it entirely empty. The wind had been so boisterous and adverse, that Daun had not heard the report of two hundred pieces of cannon at half a mile's distance; and knew nothing of the enemy, till he saw them arrayed in order of battle on the opposite side of the river. Daun was evidently undetermined whether he ought to attack the enemy or retreat. Frederick ordered his troops to fire, in demonstration of joy for victory; a dexterous manœuvre, which completely dispirited the Austrians, and precipitated their retreat. He dispersed the Russians by a stratagem not unlike that which Themistocles employed towards Xerxes. He sent a peasant with a letter to his brother Henry, telling him that he was advancing as fast as he could after his victory over the Austrians, to attack the Russians, and he hoped with equal success. The peasant purposely throwing himself in the way of the enemy was taken; the letter was found on him; and, on being read, they repassed the Oder, and destroyed the bridge; and thus, in order to avoid the pretended pursuit of Frederick, they cut off their own communication with the allied army. Frederick, meanwhile, instead of following them endeavoured to make the best of his victory by driving the Austrians out of Silesia. Daun, regretting that he had been so completely out-generaled by Frederick, employed every means to prevail on the Russians to repass the Oder, and invade Brandenburg. He at last prevailed; and in October, the Russians entered the electorate, and invested Berlin. The number of Prussians that had been left to guard the capital, was less than half that of the Austrians and Russians. The combined armies entered the capital, and behaved with savage ferocity; but the king hastening from Silesia, the enemy on his approach thought it expedient to retire. Having delivered his country from the combined troops, he returned to oppose marshal Daun, drew him into a battle in a disadvantageous situation, and gained at Torgau a victory still more decisive than that which he had obtained over marshal Loudohn. The Russians, on hearing of the defeat of their ally, retired into Poland; and thus Frederick became again superior to all his enemies. They might invade his country, take his towns, defeat his armies, exhaust many of his resources; but he had in his genius one resource, which they could not exhaust: with his transcendent abilities he ultimately predominated over all their force, experience and skill. Such was the state of our principal ally in war, in October 1760.

[Discussions between Britain and Holland.]

The war gave occasion to discussions between Britain and Holland, which involved general questions concerning the rights and conduct of neutral states, when neighbouring powers are engaged in hostilities. By the barrier treaty it had been expressly declared, that no fortress, town, or territory of the Austrian Low Countries should be ceded or transferred to the crown of France on any pretext whatever. Notwithstanding this treaty, the states-general had acquiesced in the surrender of Ostend and Nieuport to the French. They had also given permission for the free passage of warlike stores through their territories, for the use of the French army. A memorial, by order of the British king, was presented to the states. They answered, that they could not prevent the infractions of treaties. The Dutch for several years had been supplying the French with all sorts of warlike stores, and transporting the produce of the French sugar colonies to Europe, as carriers hired by the proprietors; and were at this time very active in carrying contraband goods to France. The supineness and inefficiency of the Newcastle administration had suffered such violations of neutrality to escape with impunity; but with the energy of Pitt, the case was changed. The court of Great Britain having complained of this violation of neutrality without obtaining redress, took the most effectual step for redressing themselves. They issued orders to arrest all ships of neutral powers, that should have French property on board. These necessary orders were strictly and vigorously executed. A number of Dutch ships with French cargoes were seized and confiscated; a great ferment arose among the Dutch: they remonstrated, and they complained. The British government assured them, that we were desirous of remaining in amity with them, but that we never could connive at such a deviation from neutrality; and that we should continue to capture ships caught in such acts of violation. Towards the close of 1758, they began to make some preparations for hostilities. The princess dowager of Orange, daughter of George II., by her judicious management prevented the two nations from a quarrel, which it was so much the interest of both to avoid. English privateers having frequently, without any authority, rifled Dutch ships, the masters were punished as pirates; but by our ships of war, authorised for the purpose, the aggressors of the law of nations continued to be captured. The princess dying, the conduct of the states threatened the dissolution of peace; and they persisted in supplying the French in the West Indies, and in the East had manifested a hostile disposition to the English interest. A second memorial was presented by sir Joseph Yorke. They endeavoured to justify themselves; but as the attempt was evasive and unsatisfactory, the British minister instructed the ambassador to reply in more peremptory terms. The Dutch aware that Pitt never threatened in vain, promised* to abstain from every kind of traffic that gave umbrage to Great Britain, and to inflict exemplary punishment on any of their subjects or servants who should give offence to England.

Ferdinand, king of Spain, died in 1759, and was succeeded by his brother Charles. This prince was very far from adopting the sentiments and policy of his predecessor respecting England. Hitherto, however, the difference did not manifest itself.

During the contest which was carried on by Britain and her allies, overtures were made by George and Frederick towards the termination

* See Smollet, vol. ii.

[Negotiations for peace broken off. General state of affairs.]

of war. In the winter which followed the campaign 1759, immediately after the capture of Quebec and admiral Hawke's victory, Mr. Pitt, aware that the day of success is the time for offering peace, proposed that the allied kings should intimate their willingness to open a negotiation. Frederick consented, and a memorial was delivered to the French, imperial, and Russian ambassadors, signifying that their Britannic and Prussian majesties were ready to send plenipotentiaries to any proper place that should be appointed, in order to receive overtures for a general peace. A preliminary article proposed was, that the dominions of the king of Prussia should be preserved entire. This proposal being communicated to the court of Versailles, France replied, that she had no other wish but to make peace with England; but that not being at war with Prussia, she could not confound the interests of that nation with those of Britain. France had been completely discomfited in every quarter in which England and she had to cope, apart from their mutual allies. She was entirely subdued in North America, the East and West Indies; and had been also defeated in Germany. The inferiority of her naval power obliged her to despair of success in any maritime efforts; but in Germany, though defeated, her case was by no means so desperate. From the exhausted state of the king of Prussia, and the enormous expenses of the war to England, she was in hopes that she and her allies might in that country obtain advantages, which would procure more favourable terms than she could expect from the events in those quarters in which she and England had been singly engaged. The preservation of the balance of power, by supporting the king of Prussia against the great confederacy, had been the principal object of the war in Germany. Had France ratified the proposed preliminary there would have remained little which she could set against the conditions that Britain was empowered by her victories to demand. She therefore determined at present to reject a proposal with such a preface. The empress-queen, though hitherto frequently baffled, trusted to the resources of the combination, for the ultimate attainment of those objects which she sought by the war, and would by no means enter into a negotiation, the preliminary article of which was the abandonment of her views on the Prussian dominions. The overtures were rejected by both France and Austria, in the belief that at a future period they could procure conditions more compatible with the views with which they had respectively commenced their aggressions. Such was the state of Britain respecting war, negotiation, allies, and neutral powers, in October, 1760. The condition of this country in her various relations had, from July, 1757, to October, 1760, in three years and a quarter, been raised from depression and disgrace to exaltation and glory. This change, under Divine Providence, had been principally effected by the force of genius, which overbore all private juntos and party distinctions, formed the wisest and most vigorous plans, selected the fittest instruments of execution, and by the combination of wisdom, firmness, and judicious choice, produced the most signal and important success. On two individuals, though of different ranks, yet who had each risen to a much higher elevation than that in which he was born, depended the fortune of Europe, and other quarters of the world. In their different situations, William Pitt, and Frederick of Prussia, overbore confederacy by intellectual pre-eminence and moral energy. An event now took place, in itself of great importance, and which led to the commencement of a reign in all its history, connexions, and rela-

[Death, character and policy of George II.]

tions; in the events, changes, and vicissitudes, that it has witnessed; in the difficulties which it has had to encounter, and in the displays of HUMAN NATURE which it has exhibited, the most momentous that is recorded in the annals of mankind.

On Saturday morning the 25th of October, 1760, king George II. of Great Britain, then near seventy-seven years of age, being at Kensington palace, rose at his usual hour, called his page, drank his chocolate, and inquired about the wind, as he was anxious for the arrival of the mails; observing, that as it was a fine day, he proposed to walk in the garden. A few minutes after this declaration, his page, who had left the room, heard a noise, as of something falling. He returned hastily into the apartment with other attendants, and found the king weltering on the floor; being lifted on a bed, he in a faint voice desired they would call Amelia, but before the princess could reach his apartment, he breathed his last.

George II., with abilities not exceeding mediocrity, possessed amiable and estimable qualities: he was just, open, sincere, brave, and though in his temper prone to anger, yet placable, and in his dispositions mild and humane. His government was equitable and constitutional, as far as depended on himself, but varied in vigour and wisdom according to the characters of his ministers. The chief defects of his politics arose from his predilection for his native dominions, which involved Britain in alliances, subsidies, and hostilities, that, being unnecessary, were pernicious, in proportion to their magnitude. His preference of one party of his British subjects, during a great part of his reign, though neither very liberal nor wise, was the natural consequence of the circumstances in which he was placed, operating on his limited capacity. The last years of his life proved to him that connexion with a certain confederacy was not necessary to the highest ministerial ability. In the first part of his reign, a minister of considerable talents, and in many respects beneficial to his country, established systematic corruption as an engine of executive government; and for many years this engine was believed indispensable. In the last period of his reign, a minister demonstrated, that corruption was not necessary to superior genius, magnanimity, and energy; but that talents and virtue, promptly, directly, and decisively exerted for patriotic purposes, overbore all opposition, and procured, with the applause of the people, every resource which was wanted for British security and glory. The pacific policy of sir Robert Walpole, and the persevering attention of Mr. Pelham, had a share in promoting the manufactures and commerce of this country: but their astonishing rise under this king, was chiefly owing to a more general cause of British greatness—the progressive spirit of industry and enterprise which freedom fosters.

From the same source, flowed literature and science; and in the various departments of learning, Britain was eminently distinguished. Swift, Pope, and Bolingbroke, began the literary glory of George's reign; Thomson graced its middle stage; Johnson and Hume adorned its later periods. Having before rivalled, and at this time rivalling the ancients, in the various species and degrees of poetry and philosophy, Britain now for the first time contested the palm of history, and brought her Robertson and her Hume, to match the Livy and Herodotus, the Tacitus and Thucydides, of the Romans and Greeks. Theology, investigated by the inquiring and philosophical spirit of free and enlightened Englishmen, produced valuable accessions to theoretical and

[Literature. Fine arts. Manners.] -

practical knowledge, in the works of Warburton, Hurd, Sherlock, Hadley, and Secker. The dissenters also contributed a considerable share to the learning and piety of the times. While Foster, Watts, and Doddridge, inculcated religious conduct, by expounding and impressing in detail the doctrines of christianity, the learned and logical Leland defended with force and success the whole christian religion against the attacks of the deists. Not rational piety only, however, mark the theological efforts of this period: ingenious adventurers in fanaticism framed a new species of superstition, which both at that time and since, has produced very important effects on the sentiments, character, and manners of numbers of people in all ranks. Whitefield and Wesley, having perceived that not a few of the established clergy had relaxed in the performance of their official duties, formed a project of supplying, in their own persons, this deficiency of spiritual instruction; and, in order to establish sufficient influence, professed superior sanctity, and pretended divine illumination. Being both men of dexterity and address, they played successfully on the fancies and passions, and made a multitude of converts to their respective kinds of enthusiasm. They certainly were the means of rousing the clergy to a more vigorous discharge of their professional occupation; and it is probable that they may have also made some of their votaries, by working on their fears and fancies, pious and charitable, whom reason and conscience might not have influenced. So far their efforts may have been salutary: but the first principle of their theory, divine illumination, superseding the necessity of human discipline and learning, has opened the way to many illiterate and ignorant undertakers, who, either circulating or stationary, have inculcated and impressed their absurd and often pernicious doctrines on the weak and credulous; so that frequently profligacy, and not rarely insanity and suicide have flowed from such spiritual instructions. In the lighter species of composition, England showed that she could excel, as well as in the graver and deeper. If Spain and France could respectively boast of Cervantes and Le Sage, Britain could boast of Smollet and Fielding. But now they were not only, as in the time of Anne, a few illustrious in the different provinces of genius; there were many respectable. The precepts, and much more the example, of the great writers of that age, had diffused taste and the study of composition; and many more had obtained a competent share of useful and elegant erudition, than at any former period of English history. In no age or country had learning been more widely spread than in Britain in the year 1760.

In the fine arts, England was beginning to attain distinction. The encouragement bestowed on the sublime compositions of Handel, had stimulated the natives to musical effort. Hogarth showed that England could use the pencil as well as the pen; and with the bold originality of genius, he pursued a path hitherto untrdden. Reynolds also laid the foundation of that fame, which he since raised to so great a height. In architecture, improvements were made by the taste and genius of a Burlington; still, however, a relish continued for the ponderous structures of Vanburgh.

The manners of that age, though abounding in parade and form, were in many respects dignified and impressive. They certainly contained a much greater degree of pomp, and state, and ceremony, than was necessary for social parties in common life. Mingled with

[Education and character of the prince of Wales.]

this stiffness and precision, there was, in conversation and in familiar writing, an indelicacy, less indeed than in the preceding age of George I., but still far short of just taste and moral refinement. This was probably encouraged by the practice of the court, to which modesty and reputation were not then necessary passports. The king's mistresses still continued to mix in all fashionable parties, and even to be companions to the princesses.* The signal successes which adorned the last years of George II., the exaltation of England, and the depression of her enemies, raised his majesty to a degree of popularity which he had never before enjoyed. The warm fancies of his admirers represented him as equal in wisdom and heroism to any, or all the princes that ever sat on the English throne; and we may safely concur with the historian of his reign,† that no prince was ever more popular at the time of his decease.

George in his person was somewhat lower than the middle size, well formed, with prominent eyes, a high nose, good features, and a fair complexion. He was born in November, 1683, and in 1705 married princess Caroline of Anspach, by whom he had six children, who came to maturity, besides several others who died young: two sons, Frederick, born in 1707, who on his father's accession to the throne, was prince of Wales, and William, duke of Cumberland; and four daughters, the princess of Orange, princess Amelia, the princess of Hesse, and the queen of Denmark. Frederick married in 1736 the princess Augusta of Saxe-Gotha. By her he had five sons and three daughters, who came to maturity; George, born May 24th, O. S. 1738, now our gracious sovereign; Edward, late duke of York; William Henry, late duke of Gloucester; Henry Frederick, late duke of Cumberland; Frederick William, deceased; Augusta duchess of Brunswick; Louisa, deceased; and Matilda, late queen of Denmark. His highness the prince of Wales dying in his father's life-time, in 1751, his eldest son George became prince of Wales, and heir of his grandfather's crown. As Frederick himself had not confined his preference to whigs, but desired to be king of Great Britain, and not of a party, he endeavoured to instil the same sentiments into his heir.

The tuition of prince George was committed to John Stuart, earl of Bute, who was a nobleman of respectable talents and erudition, and particularly distinguished for decency and propriety of conduct. During the life of his grandfather, his highness had been brought up in a state of retirement, and was totally free from juvenile excesses. A warm, affectionate, and benevolent heart was unalloyed by vicious habits; on the other hand a sound and acute understanding was not furnished with the actual experience and discernment into characters, which a more enlarged intercourse with mankind, in such a mind, must have produced. The filial, fraternal, and other affections of the prince were very strong. Those whom he loved, he loved fervently; in that number was his tutor, the earl of Bute; whom his judgment readily discovered to be a man of merit. It must be the coldness of experienced age, after frequent deceptions correcting its errors, not the generous credulity of unsuspecting youth, that will accurately scan the talents of those whom it loves. Even in age itself, wisdom

* See lord Orford, *passim*.

† See Smollet, vol. ii.

[His attachment to the earl of Bute.]

is often lost in affection. It cannot therefore be surprising, that the attachment of a youth of twenty years of age should exaggerate the merits of its object. His highness's regard for the earl of Bute was very great; and his lordship being zealously attached to the church of England and his religious duties, studiously and successfully infused these principles and sentiments into the mind of his royal pupil. Being a man of irreproachable morals, he saw it necessary, from the state of the court and its influence on the public, to instil such sentiments into the heir of the crown as might induce him to patronize decency and modesty, and give a change to the prevailing manners. The prince so educated, although he did not much appear in public, was, from the general report of his character, very popular. He was besides, a native of England, and presumed to possess the sentiments of an Englishman—to be more attached to his own country, than to the foreign territories of his family. A face both elegant and manly, combining the blooming freshness of youth with firmness and vigour; a countenance expressing the open frankness, benevolence and boldness of the English character; a stature above the middle size; a figure uniting strength and comeliness; with unassuming and liberal manners; co-operated with the general opinion of his head and heart, and his situation, in rendering him a favourite with the nation.

The total discomfiture of the jacobite party in prince George's very early youth, by taking away the only plausible pretext for the exclusive encouragement of whigs, facilitated the road to a more liberal choice of counsellors. Thus the change of circumstances concurred with the sentiments of his parents and the education of the prince, in forming him to be king of a country, and not of a party.—Such was our present sovereign, in character and estimation, at the death of his grandfather.

CHAP. II.

Accession of George III.—State and resources of the country.—First council of the king.—Prince Edward and lord Bute made privy-counsellors.—Meeting of parliament.—His majesty's first speech.—Expresses his satisfaction at the cessation of party dissensions—his resolution to adhere to the engagements of his grandfather.—Is universally popular.—General principle of the young king in the choice of counsellors.—Unanimity of parliament, and liberal supplies.—The king recommends measures for securing the independence of the judges.—An act passed for that purpose.—Recompense bestowed on Mr. Arthur Onslow.—Parliament dissolved.—Partial changes in administration.—Lord Bute made secretary of state.—Campaign 1761.—British operations.—Attack and capture of Belleisle.—America.—East Indies; siege and reduction of Pondicherry.—Powerful army sent by France to Hesse-Cassel.—Prince Ferdinand disconcerts their projects.—Military ability of the hereditary prince.—Marquis of Granby.—King of Prussia acts chiefly on the defensive.—Baffles the attempts of his combined enemies.—Negotiations.—Proffered intervention of Spain indignantly rejected by Mr. Pitt.—He discovers the hostile compact of the House of Bourbon.—Bold and decisive scheme for compelling Spain to declare her intentions,—opposed by lord Bute, and overruled by a majority.—Mr. Pitt resigns his office.—Character of his administration.—Marriage of the king to the princess Charlotte of Mecklenburg Strelitz.—Lord Bute, chief director of affairs.—Prejudices against.—Event justifies the foresight of Mr. Pitt.—Hostile avowals of Spain.—Britain declares war against that kingdom.

No sooner was the death of George II. known, than the prince of Wales was proclaimed king, by the title of George III. On his accession, all ranks of men ardently and sincerely testified their satisfaction. The whigs were attached to a prince of the house of Brunswick, and the Tories rejoiced that they were to be governed by a sovereign free from party prejudices. Those who were neither whigs nor Tories were delighted with a king acquainted with our laws and constitution, a native of Britain, fond of this country, and who was expected to employ talents and virtue wherever they were to be found. All regarded their young king with affection, predicted, from his character and the circumstances of the country, an auspicious reign, and were happy in the prospect afforded by his age and state of health that it would also be long.

The resources of the country which his majesty was now called to govern, were increased beyond all former computation. War, which is so pernicious an obstacle to other mercantile nations, had opened new channels to the traders of Great Britain. The superiority of her marine force had crushed the navigation of France, her great rival in commerce. She now supplied, on her own terms, all those foreign markets, at which, in time of peace, she was undersold by that dangerous competitor. Revenue and national credit were proportionably great; the immense sums required for the manifold services of the war, were forthcoming on demand. The sum total granted for that year amounted to nearly sixteen millions sterling. The British army in various parts of the world consisted of ninety-seven regiments of foot, and thirty-one of horse and dragoons, amounting to about a hundred and

[Proclamation of the king. First speech to parliament.]

ten thousand; the German auxiliaries in British pay were sixty thousand; the ships of the line, including fifties, were a hundred and twenty-one; the frigates and sloops proportionably numerous; and the seamen in actual service amounted to 70,000. The ordnance establishment was in proportion to those of the army and navy. This force was commanded by officers selected by the penetration of the minister; who, in his choice of agents, considered merely the object of the respective trusts; and disregarding family connexion, or any other adventitious ground of preference, appointed instruments the most fitted for effecting the destined purpose. The recent establishment of a national militia, answering most of the ends of internal defence, permitted the executive power to employ the regular troops, if necessary, out of the kingdom. Notwithstanding the expensive war, the means of internal security, as well as of influence and dignity at home and abroad, were under the command of the executive government, which employed so very energetic a minister as Mr. Secretary Pitt.

On the 27th of October the king held his first council, in which he declared his resolution to prosecute the just and necessary war in which his kingdom was engaged. His majesty's first proclamation, dated the 31st of October, was a strong and striking instance of his regard for the interests of religion and virtue. Its purport was, to encourage piety and morality, and to prevent and punish vice, profaneness and immorality, which at that time were extremely prevalent. His majesty, two days after his accession, appointed his eldest brother prince Edward and John earl of Bute privy-counsellors. Parliament agreeably to an act made for the purpose, continued to exercise its office for six months after the decease of the king. On November the 18th it assembled; and the new king, seated on the throne, delivered a speech, well fitted to confirm the high opinion of the public. He expressed his concern for the loss which he and the nation had sustained by the death of his grandfather, especially at a season so critical to the country; and his sense of the weight and importance of the task now devolved upon him, being called to the government of this country at such a time and under such circumstances. He implored the divine assistance in his endeavours to discharge his duty, and proceeded in the following energetic strain: "Born and educated in this country, I glory in the name of Briton; and the peculiar happiness of my life will ever consist in promoting the welfare of a people, whose loyalty and warm affection to me I consider as the greatest and most permanent security of my throne; and I doubt not, but their steadiness in those principles will equal the firmness of my invariable resolution to adhere to, and strengthen, this excellent constitution, in church and state, and to maintain toleration inviolable. The civil and religious rights of my loving subjects are equally dear to me with the valuable prerogatives of my crown; and as the surest foundation of the whole, and the best means to draw down the divine favour on my reign, it is my fixed purpose to countenance and encourage the practice of true religion and virtue." He then mentioned the successes of ourselves and our allies, the state of commerce, and the land and sea force in which he found the kingdom; after which he proceeded as follows: "In this state I have found things at my accession to the throne of my ancestors:

[General satisfaction. Act rendering judges independent of the crown.]

happy in viewing the prosperous part of it; happier still should I have been had I found my kingdoms, whose true interests I have entirely at heart, in full peace; but since the ambition, injurious encroachments, and dangerous designs of my enemies, rendered the war both just and necessary, and the generous overture made last winter towards a congress for a pacification has not yet produced any suitable return, I am determined, with your cheerful and powerful assistance, to prosecute this war with vigour, in order to attain to that desirable object, a safe and honourable peace. For this purpose, it is absolutely incumbent on us to be early prepared; and I rely upon your zeal and hearty concurrence to support the king of Prussia, and the rest of my allies, and to make ample provision for carrying on the war, as the only means to bring our enemies to equitable terms of accommodation." After addressing the house of commons on the supplies, he concluded his speech in the following words: "The eyes of all Europe are upon you; from your resolutions the protestant interest hopes for protection, as well as all our friends for the preservation of their independency; and our enemies fear the final disappointment of their ambitious and destructive views. Let these hopes and fears be confirmed and augmented by the vigour, unanimity, and despatch, of our proceedings. In this expectation I am the more encouraged by a pleasing circumstance, which I look upon as one of the most auspicious omens of my reign. That happy extinction of divisions, and that union and good harmony which continue to prevail amongst my subjects, afford me the most agreeable prospects. The natural disposition and wish of my heart are to cement and promote them; and I promise myself that nothing will arise on your part to interrupt or disturb a situation so essential to the trade and lasting felicity of this great people."

This speech was extremely satisfactory both to parliament and to the public. Very loyal addresses were returned by both houses; but that of the house of commons was peculiarly forcible and eloquent. From the promotion of Pitt to be prime minister, there had been no parliamentary opposition. Unanimity in both houses marked the first session of the reign of George III. and the most liberal supplies were granted without a dissenting voice. The sums required for the public services of 1761 amounted to nineteen millions, twelve of which it was necessary to raise by a loan, and add to the debt which his majesty found at his accession. The civil list was fixed at 800,000*l*. A message from the throne stated the extraordinary expenses incurred by several provinces of America in their exertions during the war, and parliament, as a compensation, voted 200,000*l*.

On the third of March, 1761, his majesty, in his speech from the throne, recommended a measure displaying the liberality and patriotism of his character. By the death of the king, all officers appointed by him are vacated, and require new commissions. Of these were the offices of judges. In very early times, our kings in person often heard and decided causes; but ever since the reign of Edward I. and the establishment of the different courts and of regular circuits, they have delegated that power to the several judges. For a long period these held their places during pleasure: consequently, the administration of justice must have depended very often on the views, inter-

[Pension to Mr. Onslow. Lord Bute secretary of state.]

ests, or passions of the reigning prince. In the reign of William III. a more stable tenure of office was proposed and established, and it was enacted,* that the commissions of the judges should be made, not as formerly, during pleasure, but during the faithful discharge of their duties; and their salaries were ascertained and established, so that it might be lawful to remove them, on the address of both houses of parliament.† Notwithstanding this wise provision, the office of the judges determined on the demise of the crown. With praise-worthy earnestness for the impartial administration of public justice, his majesty signified, that he considered the independency and uprightness of the judges as essential to the proper exercise of their office, as one of the best securities for the rights and liberties of his subjects, and as most conducive to the honour of his crown. He therefore recommended to the consideration of parliament, that such farther provision might be made for securing the judges in the enjoyment of their offices during their good behaviour, notwithstanding the demise of the crown, as should be most expedient. Parliament expressed a strong sense of the wisdom and liberality of this measure, and an act was passed to the effect recommended in the speech.‡

The parliament was now approaching to its dissolution. Mr. Arthur Onslow had been speaker for thirty-three years in five successive parliaments. He now declared, that his age and infirmities would prevent his return to the house; and on this declaration it was immediately moved, and unanimously carried, "that the thanks of the house should be given to Mr. Speaker, for his long and faithful services; for the unshaken integrity of his conduct; for his steady impartiality in the exercise of his office; and his unwearied endeavours to promote the real interests of his king and country, to maintain the honour and dignity of parliament, and to preserve inviolable the rights and privileges of the commons of Great Britain." The house farther unanimously addressed the king, beseeching him to confer some testimony of his royal favour on Mr. Onslow. His majesty, in answer, expressed his high esteem for the gentleman recommended, and bestowed on him a pension of 3000*l.* a year for his own life and that of his son. On the 19th of March, his majesty, having expressed his complete approbation of the conduct of parliament, prorogued it; and in April it was dissolved.

About this time some partial changes were made in administration. Mr. Legge was dismissed from his office of chancellor of the exchequer,§ and viscount Barrington appointed in his place; lord Hol-

* Statutes at large, 13 W. III. cap. 2.

† See Blackstone's Commentaries, vol. i. p. 267.

‡ Mr. Belsham labours to diminish the merit of this proposal of his majesty; by which, for the general good of his people, he showed his disposition to lessen the influence of the crown. He asserts, that this was no sacrifice on the part of the crown, as no minister would advise such a dismissal. This, however, is a mere assumption of Mr. Belsham's. A minister might advise the refusal of new commissions to judges obnoxious to him, as good judges might be to a bad minister; and a new king, before the act of 1761, had the power of such dismission: that power is, in the act desired by his majesty, entirely renounced.

§ Mr. Belsham, in the account that he gives of this change, imputes to his sovereign mean and unworthy motives. According to this writer, his majesty had, at the preceding election, (being then prince of Wales,) sent a peremptory message to Mr. Legge, who was about to be chosen member for Hampshire, pressing

[Expedition to Belleisle.]

dernesse resigned his office of secretary of state, and was succeeded by lord Bute. Mr. Pitt still continued principal secretary, and consequently at the head of administration, as he must have been of any political body of which he was a member.

The chief military enterprise undertaken by Britain in the campaign 1761, was the attack of Belleisle, a large island lying off the south coast of Brittany. This place was about twelve leagues in circumference, strongly fortified, and afforded to its possessors the command of a great extent of French coast. It was apprehended, that it might be of service to the English trade and shipping in time of peace; and as a receptacle for privateers, might annoy the trade of France in time of war; or that the French, when a treaty should be set on foot, aware of its advantages, might offer in exchange for it some other valuable possession; and under these ideas, an expedition was ordered. The land forces were commanded by general Hodgson, and the fleet by commodore Keppel, brother to the earl of Albemarle. On the 29th of March, they sailed from Spithead, and on the 7th of April, arrived off Belleisle. On the 8th, they attempted a landing where its beach was most accessible; but, after several brave and repeated efforts, were obliged to desist, with the loss of near five hundred men. Not dispirited, however, by this repulse, they determined to make another trial, as soon as less boisterous weather should permit; but this was not the case till the 25th of April. On that day they made a second attempt, and not where the coast was weakest, but strongest; they proceeded on the same principle, the application of which had carried the heights of Abraham, and they placed their chief hopes in the difficulty of the precipices: and concluded that the enemy, trusting to that circumstance, would be off their guard. To conceal their main attempt, they amused the enemy by two feigned attacks in different quarters. By these means, brigadier Lambert effected a landing, and gained possession of a hill overhanging the sea; formed his men, and repulsed a body of French, which had been sent to dislodge him from his post. Having now the command of this part of the shore, the British troops in a short time made good their landing, and immediately com-

him to relinquish his pretensions in favour of Sir Simon Stuart, a near relation to the earl of Bute. "Mr. Legge (says Mr. Belsham) represented, in very respectful language, his earnest desire to gratify the wishes of his royal highness, if timely intimation had been given him of his intention; but, as things were now circumstanced, he could not, in honour to himself or justice to his friends, recede from the nomination already made. This (continues Mr. Belsham) was a species of contumacy altogether unpardonable; and the new monarch took a very early and decisive opportunity to demonstrate to the world, how different was his system of thinking from that of Louis XII. who, with a magnanimity truly royal, declared it beneath the dignity of a king to revenge the quarrels of a duke of Orleans." Belsham, vol. i. p. 17. This paragraph contains an assertion injurious to our sovereign, without any proof or vouchers. Where is the evidence that the prince sent such a message? There is none in Mr. Belsham's history; but even if the prince had sent such a message, is there any proof, that, because Mr. Legge did not do what was not practicable, the prince should conceive such resentment against him, as on that account to deprive him of his office seven years after? Where is the testimony that supports this assertion, imputing to the sovereign, malignity and revenge? Is it a construction founded on general experience of that illustrious personage's dispositions? Are malice and rancour supposed, even by his enemies, to be component parts of the king's character? An impartial historian will admit no assertion that is unsupported by testimony and contrary to probability.

[Operations in India. Capture of Pondicherry. Project of Mr. Law.]

menced the siege with great vigour: while the fortress, on the other hand, was very gallantly defended, and several bloody contests took place. At last the chevalier St. Croix, debarred by the British fleet from any communication with the continent, and pressed on all sides, surrendered, by an honourable capitulation, on the 7th of June, two months after the arrival of the British armament. Although in England all men did not equally estimate the value of the conquest, yet they agreed in praising the military and naval exertions by which it had been obtained.

In America so much had been already done, that little remained now to be accomplished by war. The Cherokee Indians had been troublesome and incursive on our western frontiers, but were entirely defeated by colonel Grant, and compelled to make peace on our own terms. In the West Indies, a small armament, under lord Rollo and sir James Douglas, sailed against Dominica, one of the neutral islands, but occupied by the French, and reduced it under the dominion of Great Britain.

In the East Indies, as we have seen, Pondicherry only remained in possession of the French. Against this beautiful town and important fortress, in the progress of success the British troops proceeded. Colonel Coote invested it by land, and admiral Stevens by sea. In November 1760, the batteries and works raised by the besiegers suffered great damage from a violent storm, but were quickly repaired, and the operations were carried on with vigour and perseverance. The besieged made a resolute and gallant defence, expecting the arrival of a powerful fleet to their relief; but at length being attacked by famine, they were reduced to extreme distress, and obliged to subsist on the flesh of camels, of elephants, and even of dogs. On the 1st of January, 1761, a violent storm dispersed the British fleet, and gave the besieged sanguine hopes of provision and succour. The British admiral, however, exerted such diligence and celerity, that in four days after the storm, he again appeared before the place, with eleven ships of the line and one frigate, two of the line having been wrecked. Being disappointed, after such flattering hopes of assistance, the besieged became desperate; but neither they nor their general made any offer to surrender. At length a breach being effected, and only one day's provision of any kind remaining, a signal from the town was made for a suspension of arms. A Jesuit and two civilians offered to capitulate; but the governor would propose no terms, and sent out a paper full of invectives against the English, as breakers of the treaties relative to India. As the governor would not capitulate, and the offer of the inhabitants without his concurrence could not be regarded, the city was taken by storm, and abandoned to the plunder of the victors. Colonel Coote and his coadjutor, by their courage, conduct, unanimity, and perseverance, effected this conquest on the 15th of January 1761, and thus gave a final blow to the French power in the Carnatic.

In Bengal, an attempt was made to revive the power of France. On the taking of Chandernagore in 1757, Mr. Law,* a subject of France, had, with a party of French fugitives, retired into the north-western regions of India, and his European followers soon amounted to about two hundred men. The great mogul had a short time before been deposed by an irruption of Mahrattas, and soon after dying, one of his sons, Shah

* Nephew to Law, so noted about 1720, for his Mississippi scheme.

[Campaign in Germany. Operations of prince Ferdinand.]

Taddah, assumed the title of his father, supported by some of his provinces, and opposed by others. Law offered this young prince his service with his two hundred Europeans, which was accepted with great joy; and, though the prince's opponents were extremely numerous, yet, by the superiority of European genius, enterprise, and military skill, to those of the feeble Asiatics, he easily turned the scale in his favour and reduced several considerable districts to obedience. Law, elated with this success, in an evil hour persuaded him to turn his arms against Bengal; and he accordingly entered that kingdom with eighty thousand men of his own, and upwards of two hundred French. The subah of Bengal marched to oppose him with twenty thousand natives, but a much more formidable force in five hundred English. The British and their allies gained a complete victory over the French and their auxiliaries: Mr. Law was taken prisoner, and his fellow adventurers killed, taken, or dispersed; the great mogul being among the native prisoners. This victory happened on the same day on which Pondicherry was taken, and thus by both was a final blow given to the power of France in India.

We left the French in possession of the whole territory of Hesse, and a considerable part of Westphalia. Their force in Germany greatly surpassed that of prince Ferdinand, and rendered it necessary for him to act with cautious circumspection. The general object of the allies was the same in this as in the preceding campaigns; namely, to drive the French out of Germany: but the scene of their efforts was different. The French army was powerful, and well supplied with provisions. Prince Ferdinand, in forming his plan of operations, considered the different characters of the contending troops. The French, though equally brave, he knew, were not equally hardy with his own soldiers; he therefore projected a winter campaign, in which the hardiness of his own troops, inured to the country and climate, would somewhat compensate for the superior force of the enemy. Accordingly, on the 9th of February, he prepared to attack the enemy on every side, while they were totally off their guard; and on February the 10th, began his march. The centre, led by his serene highness in person, penetrated directly into Hesse, and made its way towards Cassel; the right and left of the army were each at a very considerable distance from this body: but so disposed as fully to co-operate in the general plan, which was very extensive. The hereditary prince, who commanded on the right, marched by Stadbergen and Mengerlinghausen; and leaving the country of Hesse towards the eastward, as the alarm was to be as sudden and as widely diffused as possible, he pushed forward with the utmost expedition into the heart of the French quarters. General Sporcken commanded a corps of troops to the left and penetrated into Thuringia. These movements cut off the French from communication with a strong garrison which they had placed at Gottingen, and with the army of the empire in Lower Saxony: and at the same time opened a communication between the army of the allies and of Prussia. On the approach of the allies, the French, notwithstanding their numbers, fled in great consternation; and had not the country, by its defiles and difficulties, favoured their retreat, they might have been entirely destroyed. Prince Ferdinand attacked Fruster, a well fortified town on the river Eder, one of the streams which fall into the Weser.* He found

* Not directly, but after its confluence with the Fulda.

[Various success of the contending armies.]

the place well prepared; but though at first repulsed, he in a few days compelled it to surrender, and there got possession of a large magazine. That gallant and enterprising officer the marquis of Granby,* who had succeeded lord George Sackville in the command of the English, attacked and stormed several strong forts and castles in the neighbourhood, and the chief magazines of the enemy were either taken or destroyed. Marburg, upon the river Laun which falls into the Rhine, and Leighayn, were blockaded; but the chief object of the prince was the siege of Cassel, on which the fortune of the campaign must evidently turn; since, if the strongly fortified capital of Hesse were taken, the inferior places would certainly fall. Meanwhile marshal Broglio, the French commander, collected his dispersed troops, and, being re-enforced from France, returned to meet the victorious enemy. The allied army had been divided, in carrying on the different operations; and the hereditary prince having advanced a considerable way before his uncle, was attacked by Broglio and defeated. Prince Ferdinand, finding it necessary to raise the siege and evacuate Hessa, made a very able retreat towards Hanover; and though disappointed in the hopes that he entertained from his winter campaign, yet his expedition was far from being without effect; for, by seizing and destroying the magazines of the enemy, he prevented them from availing themselves of their successes. Both armies returned to winter quarters, and it was the end of June before they again took the field. Marshal Broglio, being strongly re-enforced, marched from Cassel, and moved towards the Dimet,† to join a body of troops in Westphalia under the prince de Soubise. General Sporcken, who occupied a strong position on the banks of the same river, on the approach of the grand army of the enemy, attempted a retreat, but did not effect his purpose without his rear being attacked, and suffering considerable loss. Marshal Broglio having joined Soubise, marched forward against the allied army, which prince Ferdinand had posted on the Lippe, on the eastern frontiers of Westphalia and the confines of Lower Saxony. Discovering that the design of the enemy was to attack him, the prince took a very strong position, and also employed effectual measures for securing a retreat, should it be necessary. Broglio, on the 15th of July, made a furious attack upon the marquis of Granby's posts, and after a violent conflict was repulsed; but the next day the French made a general attack. Prince Ferdinand, though with very inferior numbers, by his skillful disposition, and his readiness in seizing advantages which were afforded him on one side by the tardiness of the French, was victorious; but the victory was not decisive. Broglio thought it expedient to separate the troops, and sent Soubise westward to besiege Munster, while he himself proceeded towards Hanover and Brunswick; and so secured his communication, that he could easily retreat into Hesse, should that be expedient. Prince Ferdinand, moving eastward to watch the motions of Broglio, sent the hereditary prince to protect Munster; which purpose he effected so completely, as to prevent Soubise from besieging that city, and compel him to retire. Meanwhile Broglio was making rapid advances in Lower Saxony: on the 5th of October he attacked the city of Wolfenbuttle, which after a siege of five days he took, and proceeded to

* Grandfather of the present duke of Rutland.

† A river on the confines of Westphalia and Hesse, which falls into the Weser.

[King of Prussia acts on the defensive. Negotiations for peace.]

Brunswick. The hereditary prince, however, being sent by his uncle to the relief of his father's capital, by the skill and activity of his movements compelled the enemy to raise the siege, and also to evacuate Wolfenbüttele: soon after, both armies retired into winter quarters. After all the variety of operations and vicissitudes of fortune, both the French and the allies were nearly in the same situation as at the commencement of the campaign.

The king of Prussia in this campaign, contrary to the plan which he had adopted in the former years of the war, and notwithstanding the glorious actions and important achievements of the preceding season, resolved to act upon the defensive. Aware, however, that this resolution would encourage his enemies, he skilfully concealed it by threatening operations which he did not mean to carry into execution. The plan of his enemies was, that Loudohn, assisted by the Russians, should undertake a war of sieges in Silesia; that Romanzo should carry on the war on the side of Prussia and Pomerania, and, assisted by the Russian and Swedish fleets, besiege Kolberg; while marshal Daun commanded an army in Saxony, which was to serve as a magazine for re-enforcing the other armies, and co-operating either with Loudohn or Broglio, or causing a diversion in favour of Romanzow. After a long siege, the Russians and Swedes captured Kolberg. The king himself undertook the defence of Silesia against the Russians and Austrians; and the chief display of his military skill was in the encampment that he formed, which defied the attack and prevented the progress of the enemy during the greater part of the campaign.* In September he destroyed the Russian magazines; and, had not his own provisions failed, would have prevented any important blow from being struck in Silesia; but on the 29th of September being obliged to leave his strong post, general Loudohn attacked and surprised Schweidnitz, which closed the campaign in Silesia. By this loss, added to the capture of Kolberg, the campaign of 1761 was, on the whole, disastrous to Prussia.

The British minister was now engaged in a business which in its consequence gave occasion to very great changes in the state; this was a negotiation for peace. In winter, 1760, France began to see that her hopes from successes in Germany were by no means likely to be realized; that Britain, invigorated by Pitt, continued with unrelaxed efforts to support her allies on the continent; and that Frederick still baffled, and was likely to baffle, all the force of his enemies. Her revenue, which had principally supported the expense of the war, was exhausted by enormous expenses, and her ambition was humbled by discomfiture and disaster, which had made the war so general. Expressing her wishes for peace, therefore, she now seemed to be in earnest. Her allies were aware, that if she withdrew from the confederacy, it would be unsafe for them to continue hostilities. Sweden, the subsidiary of France, was informed by the court of Versailles, that the state of the French finances did not permit the longer continuance of the subsidy; and the courts of Petersburg, Vienna, Sweden, and Poland, concurred in overtures for a negotiation. On the 25th of March, 1761, declarations to that effect were signed by the ministers of the five powers at Paris, and on the 31st of the same month delivered at London. A declaration of the same import,

* See Gillies's *Frederick*, p. 353.

[Views of the respective parties. Overtures between Britain and France.]

by the kings of Britain and Prussia, was dated on the 3d of April : and Augsburg was by both parties fixed on as the most commodious situation for a congress. As the number of the parties concerned, and the variety and complication of their interests, must render the negotiation intricate, it was unanimously agreed by the parties, that neutral powers should be admitted to the convention. To simplify as much as possible the views and objects of the different parties, it was found most expedient to recur to the origin of the war, in which their respective purposes had been first manifested, and by the events of which they had since been jointly or severally affected. Many as were the relations and consequences which the war in its progress involved, yet, on tracing them to their sources, they were found to originate in two objects totally unconnected ; namely, the limits of the French and English territories in North America, and of the dominions of the king of Prussia in Germany and Poland. It was agreed, that the adjustment of German differences should be the business of the general congress at Augsburg ; and that a separate negotiation should be opened at London and Paris, for the arrangement of such concerns as belonged exclusively to Great Britain and France.

To this negotiation, as pertaining more immediately and directly to our subject, we shall pay the first and principal attention. Ministers were reciprocally sent ; Mr. Stanley to Paris on the part of England, M. Bussy to London on the part of France ; and the negotiation now appeared to be in the fairest train. France, which had proposed the separate treaty with England, thereby offered a dereliction of any hopes that she might have derived from the state of affairs in Germany. It was now obvious, that, in order to maintain peace, she must make very humiliating concessions. Her proper quarrel was, by this arrangement, separated from the general cause ; and she must expect very disadvantageous conditions, as in her proper quarrel she had suffered grievous disasters. When in such a situation she desired a separate peace, it might have been very naturally imagined that she was sincere ; and not only by superficial politicians, but by men of information and experience, she was really conceived to be in earnest. France was, however, playing a game artful in its design, but shallow in its policy. The court of Spain, she hoped, would not look with indifference on the humiliation of the principal branch of the house of Bourbon. Charles, she well knew, was originally far from being so favourably disposed to England, as his predecessor had been. The great successes of the English, on an element and in quarters in which they might be eventually dangerous to Spain, had added jealousy to original displeasure. The more advantageous and imperious the terms demanded by Britain should be, the more would the resentment and jealousy of Spain be inflamed, and the more easily would that power be induced to take a part in the war. On the side of England there was sincerity in the negotiation, but there were circumstances which obstructed a peace. France was a country whose ambition had always displayed itself towards her neighbours, and more especially towards Britain, whenever she had power to give it effect : in the present contest, she had been evidently the aggressor. Our ambitious rival having commenced an unjust war, and being totally vanquished, and almost prostrate at our feet ; this was conceived to be the time for reducing her to a state which would long disable her for future aggression. Such was the general opinion of the people, and such also was the opinion of the principal minister.

[Principle of the overtures. Propositions of France.]

The negotiation, however, opened, on the ground of *uti possidetis* : that is, that the two parties should remain in possession of reciprocal conquest, and that whatever cessions were made, should be granted for an equivalent. As no cessation of arms had hitherto taken place, and as the war might make a daily alteration in the fortune of the contracting powers, it was necessary to fix upon some epoch to which this possessory article should refer. The French proposed, that the situation in which they should stand on the first of May, 1761, in Europe, on the first of July in the West Indies and Africa, and on the first of September in the East Indies, should be the basis of the treaty proposed to be negotiated between the two powers ; but they declared their willingness to fix upon other epochs, if these proved not to be agreeable. The British minister, at first, refused to admit any epochs, but those that referred to the day of signing the treaty of peace. To this the French replied, that unless a certain period of the war was fixed, it would be impossible to ascertain the nature and value of the possessions which might be relinquished ; and they declared that, unless specified epochs were fixed, the negotiations must be at an end. The English minister at length saw the propriety of the measure, but before he would treat definitively on that point, he proposed two preliminary conditions : first, that every thing adjusted between the two crowns concerning their particular war, should be made final and conclusive, independent of the fate of the negotiation at Augsburg : secondly, that the definitive treaty of peace between Britain and France, or preliminary articles to that effect, should be signed and ratified between the date of that memorial and the first of the following August. If these conditions were accepted, Britain agreed to name as determined epochs, the first of July for Europe, the first of September for Africa and America, and the first of November for the East Indies. France, having consulted with her principal ally, consented to the independence of the treaty on the negotiation at Augsburg, *provided nothing should be stipulated to the prejudice of the house of Austria*. To the second article, and to the proposed epochs, she also agreed. The general principle, and the terms of its application, being ascertained, they came next to particular stipulations. The great objects in the negotiation were six : 1st, the limits of the two crowns in North America : 2d, the conquests of Great Britain in the West Indies, together with the neutral islands there : 3d, our conquests in Africa and India : 4th, the adjustment of the particular affairs between the English and French in Germany : 5th, the conduct which the two crowns were to adopt, with regard to their respective allies in Germany : 6th, the restitution of the captures made by England previous to the declaration of war. France proposed to cede Canada ; stipulating, that whatever French colonists should so choose, might remove with their effects, and that those who remained should be allowed the free and public exercise of the catholic religion.* She required the restitution of Cape Breton, and a confirmation of the privilege of fishing on the coast of Newfoundland. In the West Indies—of the neutral islands, she proposed to relinquish Tobago to England, but that Dominica, St. Lucia, and St. Vincent, should return to her protection as before ; and to repurchase Guadaloupe and Marigalante, she offered Minorca. In Africa, she required the restoration of either Senegal or Goree ; and in Eu-

* Annual Register for 1761, p. 38 ; and Magazines for ditto.

[Reply of England. Proposed interference of Spain rejected.]

rope of Belleisle : as a compensation for which, she offered to evacuate Germany eastward of the Maine. In the East Indies, being stripped of all her possessions, she had nothing to offer. She endeavoured to prove, that the territorial acquisitions of England would hurt the commercial interests of the English as well as the French East India company ; and proposed that the peace in India should be on the same footing as the convention concluded some years before between M. Godeheu and admiral Saunders, in totally different circumstances ; and that the cession of her conquests in Germany should be a compensation for those in Africa and India. The chief difficulty was in the fifth object ; for England declared that she would inviolably preserve her faith to the king of Prussia ; and France had recently stipulated at the court of Vienna, that she would admit nothing in the treaty with England to the disadvantage of Austria. To solve this difficulty, France proposed, that the French and British armies in Germany should observe a strict neutrality ; that when his Britannic majesty should recall his forces, the christian king would recall double the number ; and that no French troops should remain in Germany, but in proportion to those who continued there in British pay. The French also demanded the restitution of the captures made before the declaration of war. These proposals were, in July, 1761, sent in a memorial to London. Mr. Pitt's answer, dated July 29th, agreed to receive Canada, but without any limitation ; and, in addition to the French offer of all Canada, demanded its appurtenances. It rejected the requisition of Cape Breton, or any other island in the gulf of St. Lawrence : it allowed the privilege of fishing, if the French would demolish Dunkirk : it acceded to the propositions respecting the West Indies, and to restore Belleisle on the compensations offered : it refused the neutrality proposed in Germany : and insisted, in addition to the evacuation of Hesse, that France should evacuate all Germany : it refused the restitution of either Senegal or Goree : it rejected the treaty of admiral Saunders as the basis of peace in India, but proposed that the East India companies of the two nations should negotiate on this subject ; and lastly, it refused the restoration of the captured ships.

While these matters were depending, M. Bussy, the French agent, delivered a private memorial from France, proposing, with the consent and communication of the king of Spain, that his catholic majesty should be invited to accede to the treaty, to prevent any disputes between the crowns of Great Britain and Spain from producing a new war : specifying the points required by Spain to be, first, the restitution of some captures made upon the Spanish flag ; secondly, the privilege of the Spanish nation to fish on the banks of Newfoundland ; and thirdly, the demolition of the English settlements made on the Spanish territories in the bay of Honduras. The sagacity of Pitt immediately penetrated the object of the proposed interference, and readily comprehended, not only the insincerity of the French in the proffered negotiation, but also the motives of their duplicity. He expressed himself rather, as might be expected, from conscious wisdom discovering an attempt to impose on it by trick and artifice, than in the complaisant style of court and diplomatic etiquette. He rejected with the strongest and most unqualified expressions of contempt, the proposals of an enemy humbled at our feet, to interfere in disputes with a nation with which we were in friendship ; and called on the Spanish minister to disavow a memorial asserted to have been drawn up

[Discussion between Britain and Spain.]

by the consent of his court. That ambassador returned at first a verbal message, and soon after was authorised by his court to deliver a written answer, in which he openly avowed and justified the step taken by the French agent, as entirely agreeable to the sentiments of his master. He declared that the kings of France and Spain were united, not only by the ties of blood, but by mutual interest. He applauded the humanity and greatness of mind, which his most christian majesty had shown in the proposition complained of by Pitt; insisted much on the sincere desire of peace, as the only motive which influenced the conduct of the two monarchs; and added haughtily, that if his master had been governed by any other principles, "his catholic majesty, giving full scope to his greatness, would have spoken from himself, and as became his dignity."*

The whole of this paper not only indicated, but avowed, a union of interests and views between the courts of France and Spain, which if the negotiation should be broken off, as it was likely to be on the rejection of the proposed interference, must produce hostilities. In the negotiation between France and England, there were two great points on which the parties could not agree. France continued to insist upon the neutrality of Germany, which was refused by England, and also on the restitution of the captures previous to the declaration of war. The faith of the country being pledged to the king of Prussia, the English administration considered the repeated proposals for neutrality, as attacks upon national integrity. Mr. Stanley was ordered to deliver the ultimatum of the court of London, requiring the cession of Canada and its dependencies, Cape Breton, and other islands in the gulf of St. Lawrence, as demanded in Mr. Pitt's memorial of the 29th of July; agreeing to the territorial restitution in Europe and the West Indies, on the conditions proposed; requiring the cessions in Africa therein mentioned, and also the evacuation of Ostend and Nieuport, and the restitution of Cleves, Wesel, Gueldres, and all the territories belonging to the king of Prussia and other allies of Britain. England insisted, that she should be left at full liberty to support the cause of the king of Prussia, according to the terms of existing treaties: she proposed to admit France to a share of the Newfoundland fishery, and to give her the small island of St. Pierre; but she continued determined to refuse the restitution of the ships captured before the war. Britain would neither agree to the proposed neutrality in Germany, nor to the restitution of prizes; France insisted on these two points, and thus the negotiation was set aside, and Messrs. Bussy and Stanley were ordered to return to their respective countries.

Our ambassador at the court of Madrid was instructed to require a categorical and satisfactory declaration concerning her final intentions. If he perceived on the side of Spain any intention of disavowing, or even of explaining away, the offensive transaction, he was ordered to accept it, and to afford to her an opportunity of plausible denial. He accordingly made the desired representation to general Wall, the Spanish minister, and received many professions of the friendship entertained by Spain for the English king and nation, but a very evasive account of the purport of the proposed interference; the minister merely saying, that nothing was intended by it that could be inconsistent with the dignity of his Britannic majesty. He magnified the matters in dispute between Spain and Britain, and

* State papers relative to a rupture with Spain, 1761.

[Mr. Pitt's proposition to anticipate hostilities rejected in council.]

added either trivial or groundless subjects of complaint. Subsequent conferences were evasive and unsatisfactory, and consequently by no means answered the requisitions made by the British minister. The French interest was evidently gaining ground in the Spanish court. France strongly pressed upon Spain the dangerous greatness of England, which would render her now so formidable a neighbour to Spanish America, and enable her, if not checked, to engross so much commerce. The christian king earnestly solicited his catholic majesty to form a family compact, which should include an offensive and defensive alliance, a reciprocation of benefits, and a mutual guarantee from dangers and attacks. Charles agreed to the propositions of Louis: a convention was formed for these purposes, and signed August 15th, to which the other branches of the house of Bourbon were invited to accede. The conclusion of this treaty, afterwards so famous under the title of the family compact, was speedily discovered* by Mr. Pitt, and confirmed his opinion of the hostile intentions of Spain. Considering war with that kingdom to be on these grounds inevitable, Mr. Pitt proposed in council, that we should strike the first blow, attack Spain before she was fully prepared, and thereby give her a lesson, how she should presume, unasked, to interfere in our affairs, with a mediation at once dictatorial, insolent, and menacing. He proposed, that we should consider the answer of Spain, as a refusal of satisfaction; and that refusal, as a declaration of war. Conceiving that hostilities were unavoidable, he proposed that we should carry them on with the utmost speed and vigour. We were paramount at sea; let us send a fleet immediately to intercept their galleons, and thus at once strike a blow that should weaken them for the remainder of the contest. In the projects of united genius and magnanimity, there is often a grandeur, which transcends the comprehension of ordinary minds, and appeals rather than inspirits the requisite efforts. Bold in conception, prompt in plan, decisive and rapid in execution, Mr. Secretary Pitt said, Spain has hostile intentions, let us anticipate her efforts, let us disable her power: so shall we speedily compel her to sue for peace and prevent ourselves from being disturbed by her unjust partiality. It is evident that we must have war; the sooner we begin, the better for us, as we are prepared, and she is not: her chief resources are on the element which we command, we may therefore arrest their progress to her ports. His colleagues, though men of sense and information, were not endowed with those powers which at one glance can view a great and complicated subject in all its parts, diversities, and connexions. They considered Mr. Pitt's proposal as tending to precipitate us into a war which might be avoided, and argued on the impolicy of a rupture with Spain. That nation, they admitted, had taken a very extraordinary and unjustifiable step; but his catholic majesty had probably been seduced by the artifices of France, and a temperate but spirited remonstrance from the British court might recall him to a true sense of his interests. The addition of another war would diminish our national strength; and the proposed seizure of the flota would alarm all neutral nations. This was the opinion of all the members of the council, except lord Temple; but as it did not overturn Mr. Pitt's reasonings,

* The informant of the British minister is generally understood to have been the earl Marischal of Scotland; who having been attainted, had long resided in Spain, but was now reconciled to the British government.

[Resignation of Mr. Pitt.]

his opinion remained unaltered. The amount was, war is an evil; war with Spain is contrary to the interests of England; and negotiation is a more desirable mode of settling disputes than hostilities. These general propositions Mr. Pitt neither did nor could deny; negotiation, he admitted, was preferable to war, if it could be employed, but it had been tried without effect. Spain was resolved to violate the peace; it was therefore just in England to prevent her attempts, and her interest to strike the first blow. As that branch of Bourbon showed a disposition to join in the enmity of the other, now was the time for humbling the whole house; and if the opportunity were suffered to escape, it might never be recovered.* We are now taught by the event, that this illustrious statesman explored the views of both actual and intentional enemies; for Spain proved hostile, as he predicted. It is also evident, that in such circumstances, the plan which he proposed was as wise as it was vigorous. If immediately executed, it would have disabled the enemy, and prevented the necessity and expense of our subsequent efforts. The succeeding part of his conduct is more liable to exception. He said, that if he could not prevail in this proposition, he was resolved to sit no longer in that council. He thanked the ministers of the late king† for their support. He was himself called to the ministry by the voice of the people; to them he considered himself as accountable for his conduct, and he would not remain in a situation that made him responsible for measures which he was no longer allowed to guide.‡ It was very obvious, that in ability Mr. Pitt far surpassed any of his colleagues; and if it be expedient for the nation that in council superior wisdom should guide inferior, it was certainly expedient that such men as the duke of Newcastle and the earl of Bute should be governed by Mr. Pitt. Perhaps, however, wisdom can best exercise guidance, where she does not assert a claim that implies conscious superiority.§

Had this extraordinary statesman condescended to employ a softer and more conciliating mode of conduct, he perhaps might have won over a majority of his colleagues to his opinions; but the experiment was not tried. Being out-voted in the council, he resigned his employment into the hands of his sovereign. His majesty declared his concern for the loss of so very able a servant, but without requesting him to resume his office. He offered him any reward in the power of the crown to bestow; at the same time he expressed himself satisfied with the opinion of the majority of his council; and even declared, that, had the council concurred with Mr. Pitt, he should have found it difficult how to have acted, in the light in

* Annual Register, 1761, p. 43.

† The earl of Bute was said to have frequently thwarted Mr. Pitt in the cabinet, but had hitherto been overborne by his superior abilities.

‡ Annual Register, 1761, p. 43.

§ Since writing the above, I observed, that lord Orford, in a letter to general Conway, expressed the same opinion: "He (Mr. Pitt) and lord Temple have declared against the whole cabinet council. Why, that they have done before now, and yet have acted with them again: it is very true; but a little word has escaped Mr. Pitt, which never entered into his former declaration; nay, nor into Cromwell's, nor Hugh Capet's, nor Julius Cæsar's, nor any reformers of modern or ancient times. He has happened to say, he will guide. Now, though the cabinet council are mighty willing to be guided when they cannot help it, yet they wish to have appearances saved; they cannot be fond of being told that they are to be guided; still less, that other people should be told so." Lord Orford's letters.

[Character of his administration.]

which he had viewed the subject. The king did not conceive Spain to have exhibited any clear proofs of hostile intentions; and, entertaining such a view, he could neither think it just nor prudent to commence a war.* Having, therefore, with the greatest condescension explained his sentiments, (sentiments that, in the light in which he regarded the matters in question, do him the greatest honour,) Mr. Pitt was extremely affected by the united dignity and goodness of his sovereign. The following day, a pension of three thousand pounds a year was settled on Mr. Pitt for three lives, and at the same time a title was conferred upon his lady and her issue. This pension subjected the acceptor to much frivolous and contemptible obloquy. Mr. Pitt's original fortune was small; the situation into which he had been advanced by his abilities, required great expenditure; his powerful mind engaging him in momentous politics, and grasping the interests of his country and other nations, he had bestowed too little attention on his own pecuniary affairs, so that he was very far from being in affluent circumstances: he had, during a most arduous conjuncture, served his country in the highest station that he could occupy; and having found her in a state of unexampled humiliation, he left her in a state of unexampled exaltation. Such a man deserved reward. All the ribaldrous invective poured out against his acceptance of this annuity, may be answered in a few words; AS A SUPPLY, IT WAS WANTED; AS A RECOMPENSE, IT WAS FAIRLY EARNED.

Mr. Pitt's resignation of an employment in which his continuance would have promoted the most momentous interests of his country, cannot easily be justified. From his wisdom, his country might have expected that he would have overlooked an opposition of opinion in a case which very fairly admitted of two constructions, though he was eventually proved to be right; that his patriotism would have induced him to have employed his talents, even though every particular measure adopted might not be agreeable to his views; and that his magnanimity would overlook what he might suppose personal competitions. But, whatever sentiments were entertained respecting Mr. Pitt's going out of office, every impartial man agreed, that a greater minister had never acted under a sovereign of England. Lofty in genius, profound in wisdom, and expansive in views; inventive in counsel, bold in resolution, and decisive in conduct; he long overbore party by unequalled ability. Sagacious in the discovery of general and official character, he discerned the fittest instruments for the execution of his plans; and employing none in offices of high political, naval, or military trust, but those whom he knew to be thoroughly qualified for effecting the purpose, he laid a sure foundation for success. The enterprises under his administration were brilliant, and the result was at once advantageous and glorious. A mind of such force of intellectual and moral qualities, energy of operation, and perseverance of exertion, which had in its powers and endowments no motives for artifice or disguise, perhaps bestowed too little care to conceal from others that superiority which it so transcendently possessed. A little more indulgence for common understandings, and somewhat less of austerity of temper and of inflexibility of disposition, might have preserved this illustrious man to the councils of his country.

This summer a very pleasing and important event took place, in the

* Annual Register, 1761, p. 44.

[Marriage and coronation of the king. Earl of Bute.]

marriage of the king. The nation, from the accession of his majesty, was very desirous, both on public and private considerations, to see him united to a consort capable of rendering him happy. Various conjectures were formed, who the lady should be that was to become the queen of Great Britain. Different princesses were mentioned; and an English woman was by many supposed likely to attain that high rank. Pamphlets were written for and against the king of Great Britain allying himself with a subject; but, on the 8th of July, a gazette extraordinary put an end to all conjectures. This paper announced that his majesty had declared his resolution of demanding in marriage the princess Charlotte, sister to the reigning duke of Mecklenburg Strelitz; a princess distinguished for talents and amiable qualifications. It was directed by his majesty, that lord Harcourt should repair to the court of Strelitz, to demand her serene highness; that the duchesses of Ancaster and Hamilton should be sent to accompany her, and lord Anson, with a fleet, to receive her in the Elbe, and conduct her to England. On the 14th of August, the noble embassy arrived at Strelitz; and the next day, lord Harcourt asked the princess for his sovereign. The proposal being accepted, a contract was signed. On the 17th, her highness set out; and on the 23d, she reached Cuxhaven, where the English squadron lay, and was received with every demonstration of joy by the fleet. After encountering very tempestuous weather, and being driven a considerable way to the northward, on the 6th of September the squadron arrived safe at Harwich late in the evening, and the next day the princess landed on British ground. Returning with the most distinguished affability the attentions that were paid to her at Harwich and the intermediate places, she captivated the affections of all the spectators. That night she slept at Wilham, the seat of lord Abercorn; and on the 8th of September, proceeded towards London, when she was met at Rumford by the king's coach and servants. On their approach to the metropolis, to avoid the streets they turned aside toward the Islington road, from thence drove to Paddington, passed through Hyde Park, and coming down Constitution hill stopped at the garden gate of St. James's palace, where she was received by all the royal family. The duke of York handed her from the coach. In the garden she was met by his majesty, who saluted her with the greatest affection, and led her to the palace, where she dined with the king, the princess dowager and the rest of the family. At eight in the evening the marriage ceremony was performed by Dr. Secker, archbishop of Canterbury. The duke of Cumberland gave the princess away; the princess became queen Charlotte, and London and Westminster were the scenes of festivity and joy.

About a fortnight after, the coronation of the king and queen was solemnized with a magnificence and grandeur befitting those illustrious personages, and the country over which they reigned. The deportment of the young queen on these great occasions, at public places, and wherever she appeared, charmed all spectators; and, when added to the accounts given by those who had an opportunity of knowing the understanding and heart of her majesty, made every loyal Briton rejoice at the happy lot of his beloved monarch.

On the resignation of Mr. Pitt, the earl of Egremont was appointed to his department; but as the earl of Bute was now considered as the chief director of affairs, and not long after, by the dismissal of the duke

[Object of the king in the choice of his ministers.]

of Newcastle, became first lord of the treasury, we may from this time date the commencement of the Bute administration. John Stuart, earl of Bute, whose respectable private character has been already mentioned, was the representative of a noble family of considerable eminence in the southwest of Scotland, and connected with the first nobility in that part of the kingdom; especially with the house of Argyle, so distinguished for its efforts in support of our present establishment; and he had uniformly taken the side of the Hanover family.* His lordship was a man of talents somewhat exceeding mediocrity, with a considerable share of that species of literature and knowledge which is within the reach of moderate abilities. He was a good classical scholar, conversant in natural history, botany, some branches of chemistry, and experimental philosophy; a liberal patron of letters, and a magnificent promoter of useful experiments and discoveries.† Pious in his sentiments and habits, he was meritorious in domestic and social relations; and, as a private nobleman or gentleman, a very valuable member of society. Such a character constantly contemplated by a prince so well disposed as his royal pupil, when joined to the pains and attention bestowed upon himself, naturally produced respect and affection; and affection in the inexperience of youth, as naturally exaggerated the merits of its object.

The king evidently meant to choose his servants, WITHOUT RESPECT TO THEIR PARTY CONNEXIONS, according to his estimation of their fitness for the offices of state. He had good reason to entertain a favourable opinion of lord Bute, from what he himself had seen and known: and it was a very natural process of reasoning, especially when mingled with youthful affection, to suppose him qualified for higher departments. There certainly was a man of much greater talents than lord Bute, but he had relinquished his employment. It would, perhaps, be difficult to show that there was any other statesman at that time but Mr. Pitt, (except Mr. Fox, who was a supporter of the existing administration,) in point of genius, much elevated above lord Bute. The earl of Chesterfield had retired from public affairs: earl Granville was too much advanced in years for so active a situation; Mr. George Grenville was one of lord Bute's colleagues; neither Mr. Charles Townshend nor lord North were hitherto known. The ministerial abilities of the duke of Newcastle had been already ascertained so completely, as to afford little encouragement for again trusting him with the chief conduct of affairs. During the administration of Mr. Pitt, he had frequently attempted to thwart that great man, in which he had been joined by others of the old whig confederacy; but as often as he made the attempt, he had been over-ruled. After Mr. Pitt had left the council, his grace fondly hoped that he should again recover the leading influence which he once possessed. He did not perceive that it must be a prejudice, which could

* I mention this circumstance, in opposition to a notion once prevalent, that lord Bute had been tainted with jacobitism; a charge totally devoid of proof, and which really appears to have had no other foundation than his name of Stuart. Indeed his appointment by George II. to be tutor to the heir of the crown, when whig principles were exclusively paramount, is a sufficient answer to any assertion resting on such a feeble basis.

† Various expensive works were printed at his cost for the dissemination of curious and useful knowledge. Indeed, there never perhaps was a nobleman in greater favour with printers, as I am assured by very respectable members of that body.

[Hostile declaration of Spain.]

attach the qualifications of a statesman, to descent from certain families, or connexion with a certain confederacy ; and that there had been circumstances which favoured such a prejudice, which now no longer existed. A power and influence founded upon accidental circumstances, not personal qualities, he expected would remain, after those circumstances were changed. It is, no doubt, proper in the mixed constitution of this country, that men of high rank and fortune should have a share in the administration ; but the precise place which, consistent with sound policy, they are to hold, and the influence which they are to possess in the executive councils of the nation, must be supreme or subordinate, according to their respective talents, combined with the situation of affairs. In point of rank and property, the administration of lord Bute, supported as it was by the house of Bedford and many other great families, was not wanting. It did not possess the highest talents : that was a want which the acceptance of the duke of Newcastle for its head would not have enabled it to supply. It must be a bigoted prejudice in favour of the whig connexion, that could wish to have reinstated the ministry which presided at the beginning of the war. As a state puppet moved by the ability of Pitt, the duke, from his numerous connexions, was of great use ; but, as himself a leader of administration, he had already demonstrated his unsuitness. Much as has been said, it has never been proved, that an administration, unless headed by Mr. Pitt, could have been formed at that time, composed of greater ability. The astonishing powers, however, of the favourite statesman, discredited with the public the administration of his successor, as it must have discredited any administration that could have been formed. Besides this comparison, the change of policy in the present king, which would not employ men merely because they were whigs, and belonged to certain great families, was misconstrued or misrepresented, as a predilection for principles contrary to those which had supported his family. The minister was represented as the abettor of arbitrary power ; as holding an office through the partiality of his master's affection, to which he was not entitled by his abilities, nor fitted by his principles. This idea of his arbitrary notions of government was farther increased, from the place of his origin and his name. He was a native of Scotland, in which there had been many jacobites, whence he was supposed to be a jacobite himself, and, as a Stuart, attached to the exiled family, at least to their political doctrines. In examining real facts, the historian finds no documents or evidence to support this charge of arbitrary principles. In the series of his ministerial conduct, there is certainly, on the one hand, nothing to excite very great admiration, and to justify the fulsome panegyrics of some writers of the time ; nor, on the other, to justify the censures, invectives, and obloquy of a much more numerous class, which comprehended abler individuals.

The negotiation with France being broken off, the court of Versailles published, what it termed an historical memorial of the war, containing the pacific overtures, and the causes of their inefficacy. The object of this memorial, as might naturally be expected, was to throw the whole blame of the war and its continuance on Great Britain: It included also personal invectives against the conduct of Mr. Pitt, whom the enemies of this country regarded with bitter resentment. The French now circulated with great industry a report, that Spain, in consequence of a treaty recently concluded, would immediately declare war against Britain. The new minis-

[Manifesto of the Spanish government.]

try of England instructed the ambassador at the court of Spain to demand, in moderate, but firm terms, a communication of this treaty; at least a disavowal that it contained any part that would affect the interests of Britain. Before these orders arrived, his lordship had received authentic information of the actual conclusion of this alliance, and applied to the Spanish minister for satisfaction. The fleet of Spain was safe in harbour, and in other respects that country was better prepared. Mr. Wall now throwing off the mask, justified the sagacity of Mr. Pitt. He gave no direct answer, but entered into a long complaint of the treatment received by Spain from Britain during the administration of Mr. Pitt, and also of the terms proposed by the court of France. It was not proper, he said, for his catholic majesty to suffer a relation, a friend, and an ally, to be in danger of compulsorily yielding to any terms which an insulting conqueror chose to prescribe; he added, that the conditions offered by France were reasonable; that, in not accepting such terms, Britain manifested an ambitious design to ruin the power of France, which, if not opposed, must ultimately crush the power of Spain; and that, in proposing to dispossess France of her American possessions, the British intention must be to proceed next to the American dominions of Spain. The impartial reader must see, that the amount of this declaration expressed in plain language was, if Britain will not make peace with France on the terms which France offers, she must make war with Spain. The British ambassador replied with cool indifference to the invectives, and with temperate firmness to the menaces; recalled the Spanish minister to the object for which he had desired the conference, and repeated the question. Wall again evaded; but at last said, that the king of Spain had thought proper to renew his family compacts; and there the conversation ended. The earl of Bristol immediately communicated to his court this change in the Spanish procedure.* It was not doubted, either at home or abroad, that the knowledge of the resignation of Mr. Pitt had contributed to the assumption of such a style. The earl of Bute and his colleagues, apprehensive that their cautious measures to avoid war might be imputed to fear, in their next step showed that, though they did not wish, they did not dread a war with Spain. They instructed the ambassador to renew his demand respecting the treaty with the former union of moderation and firmness, and to signify that a refusal to communicate the compact, or to disavow an intention of taking part with France, would be considered as an aggression on the part of Spain, and an absolute declaration of war. On the 10th of December, the earl of Bristol made the demand, when the required satisfaction was refused; he announced his instructions to leave Spain, and the Spanish ambassador at London received similar orders from his court. Before his departure from London, the count de Fuentes, minister of the Spanish king, delivered to the earl of Egremont, secretary of state, a manifesto in the form of a note, setting forth the haughtiness and boundless ambition of the British nation, and of its late minister Mr. Pitt, as experienced by Spain; and the insulting manner in which the British minister had answered the proffered and friendly interference of Spain.† Respecting the family compact,‡ it was

* Papers relative to a rupture with Spain, 1761.

† Mr. Pitt's answer was, that he should not relax from the terms that he proposed, until the Tower of London was taken sword in hand.

‡ See state papers, 1761; family compact.

[Answer of the British ministry.]

the mode, and not the substance of the requisition that had prevented compliance on the part of his catholic majesty. The king had now ordered him to declare, that the treaty in question contained only a reciprocal guarantee of the dominions of the several branches of the house of Bourbon; but with this particular restriction, that it should only extend to the dominions remaining to France after the present war. It thence proceeded to declare, that Spain had been entirely in the right, and Britain in the wrong: and this manifesto was professedly addressed, not to the king of England only, but also to the English nation.

The earl of Egremont's answer to this production afforded a very favourable specimen of the official ability of the ministry and council by which it was composed. It stated the irregularity and indecency of appealing to the English nation, in a discussion between the two sovereigns. It reprobated personal invective, as inconsistent with the dignity of the princes concerned, and irrelevant to the subjects at issue. It confined itself to facts, and recited those with an accurate reference to their respective dates and documents, specifying exactly the instances of hostile conduct which Spain had exhibited; and from these demonstrated the progress and increase of her hostile intentions, with our temperate and often repeated endeavours for conciliation; showing, at last, that her procedure amounted to an actual declaration of war.

The Spanish ambassador having departed at the end of December, war was declared against Spain on the 4th of January, 1762.

CHAP. III.

Lord Bute unpopular.—Meeting of new parliament.—Debates on the war in Germany.—Resignation of the duke of Newcastle.—France and Spain declare war against Portugal.—Campaign.—Capture of Martinico.—Expedition to the Havannah.—Policy of the undertaking.—Strength of the place.—Arduous siege.—Reduction.—Manilla taken.—Capture of the *Hermione*.—Birth of the Prince of Wales.—Campaign in Portugal—in Germany.—Revolution in Russia; and effects of it on the confederacy.—Proposals for peace.—Duke of Bedford sent to France.—Peace of Paris.—Approved by majorities in parliament.—Severely censured by Mr. Pitt, the minority, and out of the houses.—Impartial view of its merits.—Great clamour against lord Bute.—Cider-tax.—Popular ferment.—Inflamed by anti-ministerial writings.—Unexpected resignation of lord Bute.

THE resignation of Mr. Pitt in circumstances of such danger, did not pass without censure from impartial men and profound admirers of his illustrious character, and, when combined with his acceptance of a pension, was the subject of gross and illiberal abuse, in publications known to or supposed to be favoured by his successor. If these writings were really patronised by lord Bute, they produced an effect quite different from his intentions, being imputed by a great majority of the nation, to an invidious desire of degrading to his own level, a character whose soaring sublimity he could little hope to reach. Lord Bute became daily more unpopular, from his apprehended attempts to injure the popularity of a man so much his superior; and both himself and his supporters were extremely disagreeable to the English nation.

The first parliament of the present king assembled on the 6th of November, 1761, and sir John Cust was chosen speaker of the house of commons. His majesty's speech commenced, with noticing the happiness which accrued to himself, and the joy of his country, from his marriage with so amiable and accomplished a princess. He wished that this first period of his reign had been marked with another felicity in the return of peace; but, though overtures had been made both for a general pacification and a separate peace between France and England, and a negotiation had been opened, yet it had not produced the desired effect. He observed, that to him the continuance of the war could not justly be attributed; adverted to the principal events of the preceding campaign, and stated the necessity of vigorous efforts, which would require proportionate supplies; and added, that by powerful exertions only they could expect a safe and honourable peace. Addresses were returned, corresponding with the tenor of the speech, and the supplies granted for the year were 18,299,153*l.* 18*s.* 11*d.* of which 12,000,000*l.* were raised by a loan. Seventy thousand seamen were voted; of land forces, either British or in British pay, 170,000*l.* a year was settled on the queen as a jointure, in the event of her surviving his majesty;*

* It has been said, either from misapprehension or wilful misrepresentation, that the queen, ever since her marriage, has had an independent income of 100,000*l.* a year. This report is totally unfounded, as a perusal of the act of parliament will show.

[Discussion on the war in Germany.]

with the palaces of Richmond old park for a country seat, and Somerset-house for a town residence.

In the house of commons, the ablest champion of the minister was Mr. Fox; a gentleman who, with very vigorous talents and great political experience, had repeatedly underrated his own abilities when he condescended to act an inferior part to such men as either the duke of Newcastle or the earl of Bute; to both of whom he was far superior in the qualifications of a statesman. In the present session he had not to encounter any regular opposition. Mr. Pitt poured forth his energetic eloquence to invigorate government: but did not attack any of their measures, or impugn any of their propositions, unless they compelled him to vindicate his own policy. In the course of the session, the expediency of the German war underwent a considerable discussion. The origin of that war was strongly reprobated; the expense in which it involved the country was painted in glowing colours; and its events were asserted to be not only unproductive, but pernicious to Britain. Our principal ally (it was asserted) was totally regardless of our interests; he minded nothing but his own aggrandisement: and, though pretending to be the supporter of the protestant religion, was, as his writings and conversations demonstrated, altogether indifferent about every religion, and had invaded and laid waste Saxony, a protestant country.

On the other side it was answered, that the war in Germany was necessary for preserving the balance of power; that it exhausted the French in supporting their allies, much more than it exhausted us in supporting ours; that the money expended and the force employed by France in Germany, had weakened her efforts in other quarters of the world, and had greatly contributed to our extraordinary successes. That respecting our ally, whatever might be his private sentiments concerning religion, he had most vigorously and effectually defended the protestant cause in Germany; that his invasion of Saxony was justified by the hostile designs of the Saxon prince; that the papers found in the palace of Dresden were authentic proofs of what he had himself before learned, that the attack upon Saxony was necessary to his own preservation; and to sum up all, that our honour was pledged to support our allies, as well as our interest engaged to preserve the balance of Europe.

The former arguments were used by some strenuous friends of the Bute administration; the latter by Mr. Pitt, and his supporters. For the present, however, it was deemed necessary to persevere in the German war; and the sum of one million was voted for that purpose. No bill of sufficient importance to deserve particular mention in history, was passed or proposed in this session, which closed on the 2d of June.

Considerable disunion at this time prevailed in the cabinet. The duke of Newcastle, adhering to the political notions in which he had been trained, was desirous that the government should be carried on by the whig confederacy. Lord Bute was averse to the renewal of this system of party monopoly, which Mr. Pitt had so effectually overborne. Newcastle, still nominally prime minister, could not bear the preponderating influence of lord Bute in the cabinet. Besides personal competition and disagreement in general politics, they differed on a particular measure; namely, the mode of carrying on the German war, and the subsidy to be afforded to the king of Prussia. The duke proposed two millions, and, being thwarted by lord Bute, was still further incensed. He ac-

[Spain declares war against Britain. Ap. Declaration to Portugal.]

cordingly resigned; the earl of Bute became first lord of the treasury, and Mr. Grenville secretary of state; thence nominally commenced the ministry of Bute, which had really begun at the resignation of Pitt.

Spain in a short time declared war against England, and the situation of Great Britain was at this time extremely critical. She was engaged, directly or indirectly, in war with all the great continental powers; and, what was more important, against the chief part of the maritime strength of Europe. The navy of Spain consisted of one hundred men of war; and though the navy of France was reduced, it was not so entirely destroyed as not to make a considerable addition to the Spanish force. From the new alliance, powerful in its real strength, and in its principles so gratifying to the national attachment towards the house of Bourbon, despondency was succeeded by sanguine hope and animation in the minds of that volatile people. They flattered themselves that they should now be able to obtain that superiority over Britain which they had so eagerly sought, and in pursuit of which they had met with such repeated disappointments and dreadful losses. Companies and individuals, at their own expense, fitted out ships of war; and private zeal animated public efforts. The confederates were farther encouraged by the departure from the British councils of the most formidable and dreadful foe to the enemies of England; they expected that the measures of the new ministry would be feeble and inefficient, and that the country, which had cheerfully borne the expenses required to execute the great plans of Pitt, would, when deprived of its favourite minister, feel the heavy burthens arising from the war. All these circumstances tended to inspire with confidence France and her new ally.

To balance these disadvantages, Britain had the uniform success, which had made the people believe themselves invincible. She had the hope of plunder arising from a Spanish war, which had always rendered it popular, and called forth the most vigorous efforts both private and public. She had hitherto the command of that element, over which a great part of the Spanish resources must be transported. Though devoid of such a minister as Pitt, she had an administration, whom the knowledge of his character and conduct, his fame and popularity, and the low estimation in which they themselves were held, stimulated to strenuous exertions, in order to approve themselves not unworthy of their office; and who had also the advantage of his plans and counsels, which they had before opposed.

France and Spain, knowing the natural connexion between Portugal and England, and the momentous advantages accruing to this country from her commercial intercourse with the dominions of his faithful majesty, and from the Portuguese docks and harbours in time of war, determined to compel the court of Lisbon to renounce all friendship with Britain, and to violate the neutrality. On the sixth of March, the Bourbon ministers delivered a joint memorial, representing Britain as assuming a despotic authority at sea, which was equally dangerous to Portugal as to other powers, and urged the necessity of joining in an offensive and defensive alliance against England. They exhorted the king to dismiss the British from his court, to exclude thenceforward from his ports all the men of war and merchant ships of that country, and to join his forces to those of France and Spain. His catholic majesty, from the great affection which he and his brother of France entertained for the king of

[The Bourbon princes declare war against Portugal.]

Portugal, in order to secure that prince from danger, spontaneously offered and insisted on sending Spanish troops to garrison all the principal harbours of the most faithful king.

His Portuguese majesty declared, that his country and resources were totally incapable of supporting a war; that, although sensible of the good intentions and beneficent offers of their christian and catholic majesties, and desirous of gratifying their wishes, it was impossible for him to comply; and of this they themselves must be convinced, on fully reflecting upon the circumstances. He was closely connected with Britain, as well as with France and Spain; and between Portugal and Britain there were ancient and uninterrupted alliances. Britain had given him no offence; he could not therefore go to war with his Britannic majesty, without violating the honour of his crown, the law of nations, and every principle of justice. In this situation he had determined to observe a strict neutrality in a war between three friends and neighbours whom he so highly regarded, and to confine himself only to such preparations as were merely necessary for self-defence.

In reply to this answer, the Bourbon sovereigns, on the first of April, delivered at the court of Lisbon, a second memorial, more imperious, insolent, and unjust than the first. It set forth, that, from the relative situation of Portugal and England, the alliance between them was in effect an offensive treaty against the house of Bourbon. It stated, that a British fleet* had, in 1750, attacked a French squadron in a Portuguese harbour, which justified a declaration of war by his faithful majesty, unless suitable satisfaction were obtained; and if so, the ships taken ought to have been restored to his most christian majesty, the failure of which restitution would justify the French monarch in declaring war against the king of Portugal: but still it was the earnest desire of the French and Spanish sovereigns to be on terms of the strictest friendship with his most faithful majesty, to open his eyes to his real interest, and to induce him to join them against the common enemy. The king of Portugal, far from being convinced by the reasoning or moved by the exhortations of this memorial, refused more peremptorily than before to comply with the requisition, and supported his refusal by the strongest arguments. On the 23d of April, a third memorial was delivered, still more unjust in its demands, and more insulting in its language, and which concluded with announcing orders to their ambassadors to leave the court of Lisbon. In his reply to this ultimatum, the king of Portugal proved, that the Bourbon princes, in their imperious attempts to force a neutral nation to war, and in their declaration of hostilities because their endeavour was unsuccessful, had violated the right of an independent nation. Such was the origin and cause of the war made upon Portugal by the house of Bourbon; and a more unjust or ungrounded procedure is not to be found in the annals of modern Europe known at that time, not even in those of the French themselves.† The Portuguese declaration of war was issued on

* Under admiral Boscawen. See p. 105.

† In this opinion I concur with Mr. Belsham, and we both have the honour of agreeing with the renowned Frederick. "Wherefore," said he, "did France and Spain attack the king of Portugal, who had given them no offence, and over whom they had no right of control? Their object was, the destruction of the profitable English commerce with Portugal, and the attainment of better terms from England in return for their cessions of the conquests which they expected to

[Expedition of the British against Martinico.]

the 23d of May; the proclamation of Spain against Portugal on the 16th of June, and of France on the 20th.

Before the resignation of Mr. Pitt, an expedition had been projected against Martinico, the centre of French trade; and the war being finished in North America, we were enabled to draw from thence a considerable part of the army. General Monckton commanded the land forces, and admiral Rodney the fleet. Being re-enforced by some troops stationed in the British West Indies, the army consisted of twelve thousand men, and the fleet of eighteen ships of the line. On the 7th of January, the English armament arrived before the island of Martinico, and on the 16th they effected their landing at Cas Navire without any loss; but they had still considerable difficulties to encounter. The island was populous and opulent, and supported by a numerous well armed and well disciplined militia, peculiarly qualified for the species of war which the country permitted, and provided with a considerable body of regular troops. In many places the island was intersected by ravines and deep streams, narrowed into defiles, or involved in woods: where it was more open and practicable, batteries were posted with all the skill of French engineers, who had been, ever since the first attempt in 1759, strengthening the place in expectation that our successes would induce us to assail so valuable a settlement. These works were most complete in the neighbourhood of Fort Royal, a strong town which defended the approach to St. Pierre, the capital, and must be conquered before we proceeded against that city. Two lofty and steep eminences, called Morne Tortenson and Morne Garnier, protected by deep ravines, overlooked and commanded the fortifications. These heights were occupied by the enemy; which, while they were retained, secured, or being lost, as certainly lost the city and citadel. The sea was upon the right, the country on the left, and the eminences immediately before them, of which Morne Tortenson, being the nearest, must, from its position, be first attacked. On the right, a body of regular troops and marines was ordered to advance along the beach towards the town, which lay in the lower grounds beyond the eminences. A thousand sailors, in flat-bottomed boats, rowed close to assist that division: on the left, the light infantry, covered by artillery, were employed to turn the enemy on that side; while the centre, consisting of the grenadiers, and supported by the seamen dragging along the cannon, attacked the enemy's centre, being covered by the seamen acting as artillery from batteries which had been erected and disposed with great skill and activity. The general having made such dispositions, the troops performed their parts with equal courage, enterprise, and effect in every point. They drove the enemy from post to post after a vigorous contest, and at last made themselves masters of the Morne. The enemy fled precipitately, either towards the town, or to the Morne Garnier. This second eminence was as strong as the first, and much higher; and until it was carried, the town could not be reduced. It was three days before batteries could be erected, and other dispositions made, for carrying the place. While the British troops were preparing these, the whole force of the enemy descended from the hill, and sallied from the town upon the advanced posts of the English. The

make in Portugal. But is it a reason for attacking a sovereign, that there exists no lawful reason? O law of nations, how vain and useless is thy study!"

[Projected expedition to the Havannah.]

main body rushing forward to support their countrymen, not only repulsed the enemy, but pursued them past the ravines, ascended the hill, seized the redoubts, and made themselves completely masters of Morne Garnier. The French regular troops escaped into the town, and the militia dispersed into the country. The situation which commanded the town and citadel being now possessed by the British, as soon as the batteries were completed, and before they began to play, the enemy capitulated on the 4th of February.

St. Pierre still remained to be reduced. This was a city which, though not so strong as Fort Royal, might have made a considerable resistance, if the garrison had been proportioned to the strength of the place and of the interjacent country; but the militia were quite disheartened and scattered; great part of the regulars were killed or taken at Fort Royal; the planters were unwilling that their country should be laid waste, in a defence which, from the late and former successes of the English, they were convinced would be unavailing. It was, therefore, agreed, that they should capitulate for that place and the whole island, which was accordingly surrendered on the 12th of February. Martinico, Grenada, St. Lucia, and St. Vincent's, soon after yielded to the British arms. This important undertaking is to be imputed to the plans of Mr. Pitt; the next which we have to record, belongs to his successors in the conduct of the war.

The chief advantage expected by France from the assistance of Spain, was through her finances and navy. Aware of this expectation, the British ministry form their plan for the campaign with a view to these objects, and proposed to strike a blow at the beginning of the war, which should debilitate and exhaust her new antagonist, disappoint the hopes of her old enemy, and compel both France and Spain to sue for peace. The whole navigation and trade of the Spanish West Indies centered in the Havannah; an expedition, therefore, against this important possession was resolved on, as soon as war commenced. It was both a bolder and a wiser plan to attack the centre and strong hold of our enemy's dominions, than to begin with a place of less consequence, in hopes thereby of gradually attaining the principal conquest. In the war with Spain which commenced in 1739, we had begun with subordinate attacks. The capture of Porto Bello did not ensure the capture of Carthage, nor would the capture of Carthage have ensured the command of the Spanish West Indies. The conquest of the Havannah would intercept the enemy's principal resources, and, if we chose to pursue our advances, expose the whole of Spanish America. The attempt against Carthage was as difficult as against the Havannah. Where the danger and expense of two objects were equal, it was wiser to employ them upon that, which, if attained, would be most advantageous. The policy of lord Bute and his coadjutors in this undertaking, therefore, as war ministers, was superior to the policy of sir Robert Walpole and his colleagues.

Such an enterprise being determined on by ministry, we are next to view their ability in the commanders which they chose, and the preparations which they made for carrying the plan into execution. A very powerful armament was fitted out; and the chief command of the land forces was bestowed on the earl of Albemarle, the friend and military pupil of the duke of Cumberland. Admiral Pococke, who had extended the naval glory and political power of his country in the East Indies, was

[Description of the Havannah. Disposition of the British forces.]

employed to command the fleet for humbling our enemies in the West. Commodore Keppel, brother to the earl of Albemarle, was second in naval command. Thus administration regarded not only the skill of its principal officers, but their harmony, thereby avoiding the fatal error which had so powerfully tended to our discomfiture at Carthagena. On the 5th of March they sailed from Portsmouth; and on their arrival off the coast of Hispaniola, were re-enforced by a great part of the fleet and army which had achieved the conquest of Martinico, and the other Caribbee islands. There were two routes from Cape Nichola to the Havannah; the one circuitous to the south of Cuba, between that island and Jamaica, round by Cape St. Antonio; the other direct, to the north of Cuba, by the old Bahama channel. The first was the safer, but tedious; the second, in a narrow strait, by much the shorter, but hazardous. The success of the enterprise depended in a great degree on its being far advanced before the hurricane season: despatch was therefore a very important object. The season of the year was not stormy, and it was thought most advisable to take the northern route. This attempt was esteemed bold, but not rash; and so admirable were the dispositions of the naval commander, in sending vessels to reconnoitre the passage, and dividing the armament according to the nature of the sea, that, by favourableness of weather, with which from his knowledge of that climate and situation, he had laid his account, our whole force in nine days passed through this strait, seven hundred miles in length, without the smallest interruption; and on the 5th of June arrived before the place of their destination.

Cuba, belonging wholly to Spain, is by far the largest island in the West Indies. It runs from east to west, verging towards the north-west, about nine hundred miles in length; irregular in breadth, but at an average about one hundred miles. Its nominal capital is St. Jago on the south-east coast; but the most important place for size, strength, population, and wealth, is the Havannah. The harbour of this city is entered by a narrow passage, about half a mile in length, opening into a large basin, which diverges into three smaller inlets, capacious enough both in extent and depth to contain a thousand of the largest ships, and on all sides secured from the wind. In this haven the rich fleets from the various Spanish settlements in the West Indies and Mexico assemble, before they set sail for Europe. The Havannah, a rendezvous of such wealth, was itself so flourishing and opulent, that no pains were spared to give it proportionate security. The narrow entrance of the harbour was protected on the east side by a very strong fort, called the Moro, on a projecting point of land; and by a fort called Puntal, on the west, which joins the town opposite the Moro fort. The town itself is surrounded by a strong rampart, with bastions and a deep ditch. The Spanish navy intended for the West Indies, consisting of twenty sail, mostly of the line, were at this time in the harbour of the Havannah. Though not much inferior to the British in maritime force, they did not attempt to risk an engagement; but in other respects made many able dispositions for defending the town. Across the mouth of the harbour they laid a strong boom, behind which they sunk several ships. The English commanders proposed to land on the eastern side, so as to be able at once to invest the Moro, and command the country. To divert the enemy from attending to their design, a great part of the fleet sailed to the westward. While the enemy were attending to the motions

[Difficulties attending the siege.]

of the fleet, our troops on the 7th of June effected a landing. The army was divided into two great corps; the chief body was employed against Fort Moro, the other advanced southward a considerable way into the inland parts, to cover the siege, and secure our watering and foraging parties, and on that side, to cut off the enemy's intercourse with the country. A detachment was posted under colonel Howe to the westward, to create a diversion in favour of the principal objects, and to intercept the communication with the country on that side. Thus the place was either invested or blockaded on the east, south, and west, by the army; and on the north by the fleet, which commanded the sea.

Notwithstanding this masterly disposition, the British had still very great difficulties, dangers, and hardships to encounter. The sun being then vertical, the heat was excessive; water was to be fetched from a great distance, over paths to be cut through thick woods, and the cannon was to be dragged over a rough and rocky shore; but such a spirit diffused itself over the whole army, and such an unanimity prevailed among the commanders, officers, soldiers, and sailors, that, in spite of heat, thirst, fatigue, and the enemy's fire, they erected batteries against the Moro. The enemy not only acted on the defensive, but on the fourth week of the siege made a powerful sally, in which they were repulsed, with the loss of three hundred men. Our sea forces, who had hitherto afforded every assistance on shore to the land service, on the 1st of July made a very bold attempt from their own element, and opened their broadsides with a terrible fire against the Moro. As it was impossible, however, to act from sea upon that castle, without being also exposed to the batteries of Puntal, they were extremely annoyed from both garrisons, and at length obliged to desist from their cannonade. Although this heroic effort of the ships produced little effect on the north side, which they attacked, yet it was of great service to the land besiegers on the east side of the Moro. While the defenders of the garrison were returning the fire of the fleet, they paid much less attention than usual to our land batteries, which during that time did considerable damage to their works, but when the sea attack had ceased, they were enabled to return to their operations towards the land with their former effect. The contest was carried on with extreme perseverance and obstinacy, and the event seemed very doubtful. While affairs were in this state, the principal British battery took fire, and was unfortunately consumed. Sickiness now becoming prevalent in this severe service and destructive climate, rendered one half of the forces unfit for duty, and doubled the fatigue of the other. The want of fresh provisions and wholesome water increased the diseases, and aggravated the sufferings of the besiegers. As they were daily more exhausted, and the season advanced towards the time of the hurricanes, their hopes of ultimate success became fainter. Those who escaped the dangerous siege and dreadful climate, expected final destruction if they waited till the tempest began. From North America they had long looked for re-enforcements, but none arrived. Oppressed with these distresses, the commanders endeavoured to re-animate their troops. The enemy, they represented, had made a most gallant resistance; and were Spaniards in military efforts to surpass Britons? The richest prize was before them, which British valour and perseverance might still obtain. These incitements inspiring the heroic breasts of British soldiers and sailors to the most astonishing exertions, new batteries were raised. They now

[Capitulation of the Havannah. Manila taken.]

silenced the cannon of the fort, beat to pieces the upper works, and made a lodgment in the covered way; hence their hopes of success revived. At this time the Jamaica fleet brought them a supply of provisions, and in a few days they were succoured by a strong re-enforcement from New York. Their hopes now redoubled: but a new difficulty appeared after their lodgment was effected, from an immense ditch, which was cut chiefly in the solid rock. A thin ridge, however, had been left to flank the ditch towards the sea; this, though totally uncovered, the miners passed without fear, and were enabled to carry on their operations in the wall. The governor of the Havannah seeing that the Moro must soon fall, unless an effort was made for its relief, sent a great body across the harbour on the 22d July before day-break, to attack our posts in three points; but they were repulsed with severe loss. Meanwhile our miners advanced rapidly in their operations; a part of the wall was blown up, the ruins fell into the ditch, and a breach was left, which the engineer judging practicable, the general marched at the head of his troops to attack, mounted the breach, and entered the fort. The enemy made a brave but ineffectual resistance; the gallant commander fell, and the Moro was taken by the British troops. No time was lost in improving this momentous advantage. A second re-enforcement now arrived, which still farther encouraged the exertions of our armament. As the Moro commanded the whole eastern part of the town, the fire of the fort was turned against the enemy; a line of batteries was placed from the fort along the hill on the extremity of which it stood, and another line was erected on the west side of the town. On the 10th of August, when they were all prepared to play, the general informed the governor by a message, that, knowing the irresistible force of the attack which he was ready to make, he suspended it, in order to give him time to capitulate. The governor replied, that he would defend the place to the last extremity. The general the next morning ordered the fire to commence from all the batteries, which, after playing for six hours with most tremendous effect, compelled the enemy to hang out a flag of truce. A capitulation was concluded; and the English troops took possession of the Havannah on the 14th of August, after a siege of two months and nine days. The conquest of the Havannah was the most important exploit achieved during the war. The reduction of so strong a fortress was an arduous military enterprise; the capture or destruction of the enemy's fleet was a very great naval victory; the plunder taken, amounting to three millions sterling, was a most lucrative acquisition; and the enemy being deprived of the chief sinews of war, was a decisive blow that compelled them to sue for peace.

While the English efforts were so successful against the power and influence of Spain in the West Indies, strenuous and successful exertions were also made in the East. As soon as it was known that hostilities had commenced, an armament equipped at Madras sailed against Manila, the chief city of the Philippine islands. The expedition appeared before that settlement on the 23d of September, which, after a short and vigorous resistance, was taken on the 4th of October. A capitulation was offered for ransoming the place at four millions of dollars, about 900,000*l.* sterling, and accepted. An Accapulco ship, valued at about three millions of dollars, was soon after taken in those seas.

In Europe, a very important Spanish treasure was obtained by the

[War in Portugal. Arrival of British troops.]

capture of the *Hermione*, from Peru to Cadiz, by two English frigates near Cape St. Vincent's: the prize was estimated at a million sterling.

The Bourbons had entertained great hopes of success and advantage in their war with Portugal; and at first their expectations appeared likely to be realized. Their declared object was, to exclude the English from the military and commercial use of the Portuguese ports, especially Oporto and Lisbon, to which they had hitherto resorted; and to this their efforts were chiefly directed. They planned the invasion in three divisions: the first, in the north of Portugal, between the Minho and the Douro; the second, in the middle, between the Douro and the Tagus; and the third, to the south of the Tagus, to co-operate on that side with the middle corps in its attempt upon Lisbon. The northern division, under the marquis de Sarria, commenced hostilities; entered the Portuguese province of Tracoe Montes, and invested Miranda, the capital of that district. This city might have made a vigorous defence, but very unfortunately a powder magazine blew up by accident, the fortifications were ruined, and the Spaniards, before they had raised their first battery, marched into the town by the breaches in the wall. Before the end of May, they had made such progress, that Oporto was in imminent danger; and the English admiralty, under the apprehension of its capture, prepared transports to carry off British effects. The Portuguese peasants, instigated and directed by some English officers, arming themselves, took possession of a defile through which the enemy must necessarily pass, [•]drove them back, and thereby checked their progress upon that side. The middle division of the Spaniards entered Portugal by Beira, and laid siege to Almeyda, on the frontiers of Spain. This city made a gallant resistance; but the Spaniards being joined by the greater part of their northern army, and by eight thousand auxiliaries, compelled it to capitulate on the 25th of August. After this capture, the Spaniards made themselves masters of the greater part of the province of Beira, as far as the Tagus, and even Lisbon itself was in danger.

At this juncture a body of troops arrived from England under the command of brigadier-general Burgoyne, and count La Lippe, a German officer of great celebrity, was placed at the head of the native forces. Early in the campaign, the court of Lisbon had not paid the proper and prudent attention to the advice of the British ambassador and officers, but, taught by their miscarriages, and influenced by the persuasions of La Lippe, they now adopted a different line of conduct. The Portuguese and English commanders, having in concert investigated the state of affairs, adopted a plan of military policy very frequently successful. The most effectual measure of defensive war, they concluded to be offensive operations. History informed them, that the best mode of relieving a country from invasion, was by invading the country of the enemy. The third body of Spaniards destined for southern Portugal, was still in Spanish Estremadura. Should it effect a junction with the army in Beira, it was probable that the whole would overwhelm the Portuguese and their auxiliaries. While La Lippe himself watched the motions of the middle army, he sent general Burgoyne into Spain against the other, posted at Valentia d'Alicantara,* where they also understood the enemy had considerable magazines. Burgoyne, by a forced march of five days,

* Not the great city of Valentia, which is an opposite part of the kingdom.

[Defeat of the Spaniards. Death of Elizabeth of Russia.]

arrived at Valentia, surprised the Spanish troops, defeated them, destroyed one of the best regiments in their service, and took many prisoners, including their principal officers and the general. Though the British were disappointed in their expectation of finding magazines in this place, yet their success produced a very important change in the aspect of the campaign. It not only prevented the invasion of Portugal on that side, but disconcerted the plan of the main army; which was, to cross the Tagus from Biera, a mountainous country, to Alentejo, an open champaign country, where their cavalry, in which their chief force consisted, could act with the full effect. The chief Bourbon army still continued to attempt the passage of the Tagus, to the banks of which they were now advanced. La Lippe and Burgoyne, by very active and skilful efforts, prevented them from effecting their purpose. Burgoyne being posted at Villa Velha, on the southern bank of the river, where the Spaniards occupied the opposite side, observing their camp was not guarded with military vigilance, and that their flank and rear were uncovered, determined to attack them by surprise. Accordingly, fording the river in the night of October the 6th, he attacked them on the flank, while colonel Lee assaulted them on the rear, and defeated them with great slaughter. This victory, which at another time of the year might have been attended only with temporary advantages, from the advanced season, proved decisive. Great rains falling, and winter approaching, the enemy, having seized no posts fit for winter quarters, evacuated Estremadura, and returned to the frontiers of Spain. Thus, after partial success, they were entirely defeated in the great object of the campaign; and the unjust ambition, which had stimulated the Bourbons to war with Portugal, ended in disappointment, and disaster to themselves.

In winter 1761-2, at a time when the king of Prussia's affairs appeared to be at the lowest ebb, and when, from the events of the preceding campaign and the progress of the enemy, little doubt was entertained that, in the ensuing summer, the combined parties would attain their object in the dismemberment of his dominions, an event took place, which made a total change in the situation of the contending parties. This was the death of the empress Elizabeth of Russia, the zealous friend of the house of Austria, and the inveterate enemy of Frederick, on the 2d of January, 1762. Elizabeth's enmity to the Prussian king in some degree arose from resentment, but was much more the result of ambitious policy. By conquering Prussia, in addition to the extent of coast which she already possessed on the Baltic, she would have the means of becoming a very great maritime power, the first object of the Russian sovereign, since czar Peter the Great. She would also open the way to an irresistible power in Poland, and be able to overawe Denmark; and her ancient rival Sweden; but if the power of the king of Prussia continued entire, these great objects could not be attained. Peter, her heir, was partial to the king of Prussia; and, as we have seen, used his influence, in 1758, to call off the Russians. On his accession to the throne, he immediately concluded a peace and an alliance with Prussia; and the Russian army in a short time joined the troops of Frederick against Austria. At this time, Sweden, which had been principally directed by Russia, also made peace with the Prussian king. This was a most unexpected revolution in Frederick's favour, as it left him, now supported by Russia, to contend with Austria only.

[Operations of prince Ferdinand. Success of the allies.]

A treaty had been annually renewed between Britain and Prussia, by which they engaged not to conclude a peace without mutual consent; and this year the British government refused the renewal. Frederick exclaimed bitterly against this conduct as a breach of faith,* but without reason: the engagement being expired, its renewal was no longer a question of justice, but of policy. When the king of Prussia was pressed by a combination of enemies, it became necessary for Britain to support him in order to preserve the balance of power, but now he was more than a match for his enemies. Though it was our interest to prevent him from being overwhelmed, we had no interest in promoting his ambition; the war in Germany, therefore, was continued not to support Frederick, but to oppose France.

The French were in possession of Cassel, and great part of Westphalia. Marshal Broglie was now displaced from the command; the prince de Soubise succeeded to his employment of general in chief, and marshal d'Estrees was second in command. The French this year maintained only one army in Germany, with a reserve under the prince of Condé, to cover the Lower Rhine; and their object, as in the former year, was to penetrate into Hanover. Prince Ferdinand's purpose was nearly the same as in the preceding campaign, to dispossess the enemy of their conquests, and drive them out of Germany. He sent the hereditary prince to oppose Condé, while he himself formed his measures against the main army. The French, at the opening of the campaign, were strongly posted on the frontiers of Hesse at a place called Græbstein; and, trusting to their position, apprehended no attack from prince Ferdinand. The prince, however, made a general assault upon the camp on the 4th of July; in which, by his skill and intrepidity, the valour of his whole army, and particularly the courage and activity of the marquis of Granby, he gained so great a victory, as to give him a decided superiority through the whole campaign. Every measure of prince Ferdinand was part of a well digested and arranged plan; so that when successful, he was able to make the best use of his advantage. Lord Granby and Lord Frederick Cavendish were sent forward in pursuit of a numerous body of French that were stationed at Horn, in order to preserve the communication between the main army and Frankfort. The English commanders attacked the enemy with such vigour on the 6th of July, that though they defended themselves valiantly, they were defeated and routed. By this victory, the intercourse with their magazines at Frankfort was entirely intercepted; and they now found it necessary to evacuate Gottingen. Prince Ferdinand attacked prince Xavier, who commanded the Saxon auxiliaries in the French pay at the Fulda, and defeated him; but marshal d'Estrees coming to his support, saved him from utter destruction. The French generals being straitened for provisions and hard pressed on every side, thought it expedient to call the prince of Condé to their assistance. The hereditary prince finding that the reserves of the enemy were preparing to join the main army, made dispositions for obstructing their progress. Prince Ferdinand endeavoured to bring the French to battle before the junction could be effected, and proposed to ford the Fulda and make a general attack on the 8th of August; but, immense rains having fallen, the river was im-

* See his Seven years War—winter, 1761-2.

[Campaign of Frederick. Peter III. of Russia.]

passable. The general of the allies sent his second nephew, prince Frederick of Brunswick, towards Cassel, with a view to blockade that place. The hereditary prince watched the prince of Condé so closely, that he could not advance to join the main army; and the prince de Soubise, therefore, was obliged to retreat to join the reserves. The hereditary prince, on the 30th of August, attacked a body of French, which he conceived to be a detachment; but soon found that it was the van-guard of Soubise's army. His serene highness defended himself with his usual conduct and intrepidity; but, being pressed by superiority of numbers, and dangerously wounded, his troops were obliged to give way. This misfortune for a time disconcerted prince Ferdinand's plan; but having with the utmost despatch collected the routed forces, he again prepared to act on the defensive; and prince Soubise, to avoid an engagement, retired. Prince Ferdinand's army being now between the French and Cassel, prince Frederick regularly invested that city on the 15th of October, and on the 7th of November it surrendered by capitulation, and the whole of Hesse was recovered. Thus, in the campaign of 1762, the French, who had projected to conquer Hanover, were, by the skill and courage of prince Ferdinand, the hereditary prince, and lord Granby, driven from their former conquests.

The king of Prussia, instead of being obliged to act on the defensive, was now enabled to resume offensive operations. His object was, to recover Silesia, compel marshal Daun, who was posted there, to retire to Bohemia, and afterwards to re-enforce prince Henry, (now in Saxony,) and a second time conquer that electorate. To distract the attention of marshal Daun, he employed a body of troops to assist the Tartars, whom he had instigated to harass Hungary and Moravia. In June, Frederick being joined by the Russians, made great advances, and, without any regular battle, obliged marshal Daun to abandon very strong posts in Silesia, to retire to the extremities of that country, and leave Schweidnitz entirely uncovered. With his Russian auxiliaries Frederick now prepared to invest that city, and a considerable body of those allies ravaged Bohemia; when a very unexpected and extraordinary revolution threatened to overturn his plan of operations.

Peter III. no sooner ascended the throne of Russia, than he showed that he had fallen into one of the most fatal errors which a sovereign of ordinary capacity can commit; this was, the adoption of the example of a very able and extraordinary ruler for the model of his conduct. Peter, indeed, chose two very great men for his patterns; his grandfather czar Peter the Great, in civil and political; and the king of Prussia, in military departments. The government of Russia, absolutely despotic, is, from this very despotism, the most insecure to its holder, unless he has the policy to conciliate the affections of its supporters. Fear being the principle of a despotic government, its most effectual props are gloomy superstition and military force: accordingly in Russia, priests and soldiers were the chief stays of the emperor's authority, and with both these bodies Peter imprudently contended. He began like Peter I., with opposing the exorbitant pretensions of the Russian clergy, and ventured to appropriate their possessions to the public revenue. The Russians were the slaves of the most abject superstition that could enchain ignorant minds, and valued their priest more than their monarch. The extraordinary qualities of the first Peter, and the benefits accruing from them

[Innovations of Peter. Revolution in Russia.]

to the country, had given to him a superiority over any of their clergy, even in the estimation of the bigoted barbarians whom he governed; but in the character of his grandson, there was nothing which would excite such veneration, or confer such influence. The boundless admiration of Peter for the king of Prussia extended to the adoption of his religious opinions, and operated in a line of conduct which that king was too wise to pursue. He interfered with the institutions that were venerated by his people, and obstructed rites and ceremonies, which, however trivial in themselves, no wise governor will interrupt when associated by his subjects with religious doctrines and sentiments. Desirous of innovation, but narrow in understanding, he pursued it in objects commensurate to the littleness of his own mind. He proposed changes in the dress of the clergy, and that the ecclesiastics should no longer, as before, be distinguished by beards. To this momentous change he added also some new regulations about images and pictures in churches. From this attack upon the beards of the living, and the pictures of the deceased, together with various other alterations, his subjects apprehended their prince to be a heretic, if not an infidel. In the seizure of the revenues, however, the clergy found the most dangerous apostasy from the purity of the Greek church, and regarded his reforms with dread and resentment: with them also the other powerful body, the army, concurred in discontent. The same admiration of the king of Prussia made Peter extravagantly fond of his military discipline; and being a native of Holstein, he was farther induced to this preference by a national partiality. He was evidently most attached to the German guards, in preference to the native Russians. He himself wore the Prussian uniform, and obliged his soldiers to adopt that dress, and abandon the modes with which in their minds the glory of Russia was associated: in short, he disgusted the Russian army. The king of Prussia foresaw the dangers of his ally from these precipitate changes, and frequently, by private letters and messengers, endeavoured to dissuade him from persisting in his present conduct; his dissuasives, however, were unavailing. Meanwhile Peter was preparing to go to war with Denmark, on account of a dispute between that country and Holstein, in which Russia had no concern. This project increased the disaffection of his subjects, who considered themselves as sacrificed to German interests, and a conspiracy was formed against his government. As Peter had alienated the affections of his subjects, he had long lost those of his own family. His wife Catharine, a princess of the house of Anhalt Zerbst, was a woman of powerful understanding and boundless ambition.* Prone to the gallantry so prevalent at the dissolute court of the voluptuous Elizabeth, her love of pleasure was secondary to her love of power: her most distinguished favourites were paramours of such talents and qualities as could well promote great designs. For the last seven years of Elizabeth's reign, Peter and she had rarely cohabited; each was occupied with their respective intrigues. Catharine, too able and prudent to neglect appearances, was somewhat attentive to concealment; while Peter, from the silly vanity of a weak understanding, was ostentatious in the display of amours. He lived openly with the countess Woronzoff; and was even suspected to intend confining the empress, and raising his courtesan to the throne.

* See *Memoirs of Catharine II.*

[Catharine. Birth of the prince of Wales.]

The principal nobles and chief officers of the state and army formed a combination to depose a prince, who was hated for his conduct, and despised for his incapacity. So little was the czar informed respecting his most momentous interests, that the conspiracy became general, and the clergy were met for his deposition, before he knew that such a step had been projected. Catharine, understanding that the design was declared, immediately wrote to Petersburg, and harangued the guards, who unanimously declared Peter deposed, and the empress independent sovereign of Russia. This act being applauded by the nobility and clergy, Catharine, at the head of her troops, marched towards a country seat in which Peter resided. The weak and timid prince being informed that he was no longer emperor of Russia, quickly wrote letters renouncing the sovereignty, and requested leave to retire to his native Holstein with his mistress; but this leave was denied. He was farther intimidated to sign a paper declaring his incapacity for government, the weakness and folly of his administration, and the necessity of his deposition: he was thrown into prison, where, in a few days, on the 6th of July, he died of what was called an hæmorrhoidal colic, the causes and symptoms of which it belongs not to this history to investigate.

Having ascended the throne of Russia, Catharine fearing that the Prussian king might prevail on the Russian troops who served in his army to declare in favour of Peter, ordered them to withdraw from Silesia into Poland. Frederick, contrary to her apprehensions, made no opposition to their departure: he only requested that it might be deferred for three days, to which the general very readily consented. The Austrian commanders were ignorant of the revolution in Russia. Frederick, trusting to their conviction that the Russians were co-operating with him, attacked marshal Daun, compelled him to retire, and by this means rendered the siege of Schweidnitz still practicable. Though he was now deprived of auxiliaries, he invested the town on the 20th of September, and soon compelled it to surrender. In Saxony prince Henry had been no less successful, when, towards the close of the campaign, he was reinforced by his royal brother; and all the conquests that he had achieved in that country early in the war, and lost the last campaign, were completely recovered.

In the internal history of England the most material event which happened this summer, was the birth of a son and heir to their majesties. On the 12th of August, between seven and eight in the morning, the queen was safely delivered of a prince. Just after this important accession to the royal family was announced, the treasures of the captured ship *Hermione*, drawn in wagons, and escorted by troops from Portsmouth to London, entered St. James's street in a grand procession. His majesty and the nobility went to the palace windows, and joined with the acclamations of the people on two such joyful occasions. The young prince, from his birth electoral prince of Brunswick-Lunenburg, duke of Cornwall and Rothsay, earl of Carrick, baron of Renfrew, lord of the Isles, and great steward of Scotland, was, on the 17th, by letters patent under the seal of Great Britain, created prince of Wales and earl of Chester. On the 8th of September, the anniversary of the royal marriage, his highness was christened by his grace the archbishop of Canterbury, the duke of Cumberland and the duke of Mecklenburg Strelitz being god-

[Pacific dispositions of the belligerent powers. Earl of Bute.]

fathers, and the princess dowager godmother. The young prince was named George Augustus Frederick.

The court of France, in the events of this campaign, found that the expectations which had been formed from the family compact were entirely disappointed. Spain saw that her interference to assist the principal branch of the Bourbons, instead of producing the desired effect to her ally, was involving herself in similar disasters and humiliation. They both began to wish sincerely for peace, and were in a disposition to purchase it by very great concessions. In Britain, changes had taken place which rendered the re-establishment of tranquillity much less difficult. From the commencement of his administration, the earl of Bute had shown a disposition to procure peace, as soon as it could be concluded with sound policy and national honour; and, though patriotism may have had its share in exciting this desire, yet there were other causes which no doubt co-operated. These are to be found in the character of the Bute administration, the state of parties, and of the public mind. The earl of Bute had for some months been first lord of the treasury, and the greater number of whigs had either been dismissed, or resigned; so that there was a formidable confederacy hostile to the present minister. A less numerous but more able body, headed by Mr. Pitt, without coalescing with the Newcastle party, was adverse to the ministry. From the known attachment of his majesty to the earl of Bute, that nobleman was accounted the private and confidential friend of the king. Being decorated with honours at the commencement of the reign, and soon after promoted to high office, which was not in the public estimation conferred upon his political talents and virtues, he was generally esteemed and styled the royal FAVOURITE. Though his majesty himself proposed to govern the kingdom by wisdom and virtue, and not by party, yet that was thought to be far from lord Bute's object. Since, by the appointment of him and his friends, the nation did not conceive that there was an accession of wisdom or virtue to his majesty's counsels; and since their rise was imputed to private favour and not public merit, it was apprehended that the project of the minister was to govern by what his opponents called a system of mere court favouritism. The supposed operation of this plan was exhibited with great force and eloquence, both by speakers in parliament, and political writers.* The deportment of Bute was by no means such as tended to counteract this unpopularity. Notwithstanding his erudition and knowledge, he had imbibed the pride and prejudices of a Scottish chieftain. With exemplary morals, he was reserved and haughty in his manners, and in that respect as different from the frank, affable duke of Newcastle, as in point of abilities from Mr. Pitt. He was, besides, charged by the whigs with being the friend of arbitrary power. In his appointment to subordinate offices, he had frequently removed Englishmen of known and respectable characters, to make room for Scotchmen, who, however respectable, were not known, and were presumed to be the abettors of arbitrary power; and this partiality increased the popular ferment. The whig party had been uniformly connected with the monied interest, and Pitt possessed the most unlimited confidence of that important body of men. The supplies of the current year had been raised while the duke

* The substance and spirit of all that was said, or perhaps could be said, upon this subject, may be seen in Mr. Burke's celebrated pamphlet on the Discontents, published in the Grafton administration.

[Negotiations. Outlines of the peace with France, Spain, etc.]

of Newcastle was at the head of the treasury. On lord Bute they had no reliance ; and in the year which was to follow, the capitalists were more likely to obstruct than to facilitate the supplies. A great host of opposition, though in two divisions, yet one in enmity to the minister, appeared ready to attack him when parliament should be assembled. So thwarted and obstructed, to carry on the war with the force and success which the nation, exulting in recent victory, expected, would, he conceived, be impracticable. Besides, he thought the actual resources of the country were nearly exhausted, and that another campaign would produce financial distress ; the difficulties of perseverance in attempting to reduce the power of Bourbon, therefore, appeared to his mind as impossibilities : for all these reasons, he was desirous that a negotiation should be commenced.

The king of Sardinia, the friend of the contending states on both sides, understanding their respective and relative dispositions, offered so far to interfere, as to communicate them to each of the parties. The belligerent powers very readily consented to open a negotiation ; and it was agreed, that a person of the first distinction should be reciprocally sent to London and Paris. The duke de Nivernois came on the part of France, and the duke of Bedford went on the part of England, in September, 1762. In the negotiation of 1761, a principle had been established between the two crowns, that their respective propositions, if the treaty were broken off, should be considered as retracted, and as never made : the negotiation of 1762, therefore, was not a renewal of that of 1761. Still, however, from the similarity of circumstances, it assumed somewhat of a similar spirit, so far as regarded the peculiar interests of Great Britain ; and respecting Germany, there was a very material difference.

France and England both recurred to the original cause of the war, the limits of the North American territories. The French king not only renounced all pretensions to Nova Scotia, but ceded the whole of Canada and its dependencies, including the Louisiana ; and whereas the French had pretended a right to the country which reaches from the Ohio to St. Lawrence, and had built a train of forts to command the communication, his christian majesty ceded the whole of that tract, and also the forts and settlements. Spain relinquished Florida ; so that from Hudson's bay to the southern cape of Florida, from the Atlantic to the confines of New Mexico, the continent of North America was a part of the British empire. To command the navigation of St. Lawrence, and to secure the possessions of her northern acquisitions, Britain was to retain the islands of Cape Breton and St. John. We were to give up to the French the small islands of St. Pierre and Miquelon near Newfoundland. By the treaty of Utrecht, the Newfoundland fishery had been divided between France and England. Britain wished her rival now to relinquish the whole, but France would not hearken to the proposal ; at length a compromise was made, by which Britain was to possess the greater share. The next object was the West Indies, which was one of the chief sources of commerce, wealth, and maritime force to our enemies ; here we had made great conquests ; the question was, whether we should retain them, as acquisitions to ourselves, and as an increased security for a PERMANENT peace by diminishing to the opposite party the means of war ; or without carrying our views to distant objects, sacrifice them, in order to facilitate an immediate peace. The British ministers favoured the latter alternative. We ceded to Spain the Havannah, with a considerable part

[Discussion of the treaty in parliament.]

of Cuba; to France, the islands of Martinico, Gundaloupe, Marigalante, Desirade, and St. Lucia. We retained the islands of Tobago, Dominica, St. Vincent's and the Grenadas. To the three former (as well as to St. Lucia which surrendered) Britain had an old claim; the last only was a new acquisition, and the three others were then of little value. Spain consented that the English should, without disturbance, cut logwood in the bay of Honduras. In Europe Belleisle was restored to the French, Minorca to the English, and the fortifications of Dunkirk were to be destroyed, according to former treaties. In Africa Goree was restored to France, and Senegal retained by England. In the East Indies Britain returned all the French factories and settlements; France having stipulated to erect no fortifications in Bengal or Orissa, and to acknowledge the reigning subahs of Bengal, the Decan, and the Carnatic.

Concerning our allies, it was agreed, that the French and Spaniards should evacuate Portugal, and that France and Britain should observe a strict neutrality respecting the disputes in Germany; that each should withdraw their forces, and discontinue subsidies. Such are the outlines of the peace, of which the preliminaries were signed and interchanged on the 3d of November, 1762, between the ministers of Great Britain, France, Spain, and Portugal.

On the 25th of November, parliament met; his majesty's speech described the successes obtained in various quarters of the world by the perseverance and valour of his land and sea forces; and stated as the consequence of those victories, that the enemy had made peace on terms highly advantageous to Britain; by which his territories were greatly augmented, and new sources were opened for trade and manufactures. He recommended attention to the improvement of our acquisitions, and firmness and unanimity, as the surest means of rendering the advantages of the peace more extensive and permanent.

The preliminaries underwent a very able discussion in both houses. Mr. Pitt attacked them as derogatory to the honour and interests of the kingdom, as being totally inadequate to the terms which our successes might have commanded, as a surrender of those advantages which our glorious efforts had procured to ourselves, and a sacrifice of public faith in the abandonment of our allies. These general objections he and others illustrated by a detailed inquiry into the several articles. France, it was contended, was chiefly formidable to us as a maritime and commercial nation. Though we had acquired an extensive territory in America, yet by our stipulation respecting the Newfoundland fishery, we had left her a nursery of seamen; by the restoration of her West India possessions, we had given her back the means of a most beneficial commerce; and thus had put her in the way of recovering her losses, and being again formidable on our own element. The fishery formed a multitude of seamen, and the West India islands employed them when fully trained. France, by possessing a much greater quantity of sugar land, had been long superior to us in this lucrative branch of commerce. She had thus enriched her merchants, increased her revenue, and strengthened her navy: why then, after we had in a just and necessary war deprived her of such valuable possessions, should we restore to her the means of again annoying ourselves? The retention of the considerable French plantations was necessary to the permanent security of a peace. Besides, after so expensive a war, our victories gave us a claim to some indemnification; in that view,

[Arguments against and for the treaty.]

the islands would have been the most productive of our conquests. Our acquisitions in America might tend to our security, but it would be very long before they could lead to our indemnification. They neither increased in any important degree our commerce, nor diminished the commerce of France; but the West India islands, if retained, would have been an immediate great gain to Britain, and loss to our rival. The retention of the West Indies was farther necessary to the improvement of our acquisitions in North America, and also to our commerce with Africa. In that event, it was argued, the African trade would have been augmented by the demand for slaves, and the trade of North America would have all centered in Britain; whereas, the islands being restored, a great part of the northern colony trade must fall, as it had hitherto done, to those who had lately been our enemies, and would still be our rivals. For these reasons, either Martinico, or Guadaloupe, or even both, should have been retained by Britain. The cessions made in Africa and in the East Indies would have fully justified the reservation to ourselves of our West India conquests. Provident policy required that we should have reserved those possessions, and our resources and irresistible naval strength would have enabled us to retain them, in defiance of the enemy. If in the negotiation, availing ourselves of our advantages, we had decisively refused such cessions, the enemy would not have adhered to the requisition, with the alternative of the continued war; or, had they been so obstinate, British force would soon have reduced them to compliance. Concerning our ally the king of Prussia, it was insisted, that, in deserting his interests, we had violated the national faith.*

Such were the arguments adduced both in and out of parliament by those who disapproved of the peace, which the minister and his supporters answered to the following effect. The original object of hostilities was, the security of our continental possessions in North America; the dangers to which these colonies had been exposed, and the expensive and bloody war resulting to Great Britain from those dangers, rendered it necessary to prevent the possibility of their recurrence. Experience had shown, that while France possessed a single place on the continent of America, we should never be secure from a renewal of hostilities: the removal of the French from our neighbourhood in that country, was therefore the most effectual means of preventing future war.† The security so produced would also tend ultimately to indemnification: as it would not only save us from the necessity of another war, increase our trade and

* The writings of those times charged the minister with very gross breach of faith and base treachery, in endeavouring to stimulate both Austria and Russia against Prussia, while he was professing the greatest zeal for the security of that prince: but no authentic evidence is adduced to support the allegation. See History of the Minority, 1762, 1763, 1764, 1765.

† It has been frequently alleged by speculative politicians, that this very removal of the French from our American colonies, by freeing them from the apprehension of a foreign enemy, encouraged that proud and refractory spirit which ended in revolution. This, however, appears to be a fanciful hypothesis. The Americans were morally certain that the French would join in supporting disaffection, rebellion, and revolt, in order to annoy Great Britain; and they could have contributed their assistance more easily and expeditiously if they had retained part of their North American settlements, than when totally deprived of those possessions. In short, this theory originates in French ingenuity, and not in English reasoning.

[Impartial estimate of the treaty.]

revenue, and lower our debt, but permit our colonies to extend their commerce and population. The population of the colonies had of late very rapidly advanced, and the increase of the trade with the mother country had been proportionate. North America itself would soon afford a demand for our manufactures, and employ almost all the working hands in England. They expatiated on the immense resources to commerce which must arise from the possession of the American continent; and argued, that, great as commercial advantages are, they ought not to be the sole consideration, but that number of subjects and extent of territory, contributed no less to the greatness of an empire. France, they said, would never agree to a considerable cession in the West Indies, where the importance of our possessions depended on the North American colonies, from which they derived their principal provisions and other supplies, and that commerce fully compensated for our inferiority in West India productions. *They contended, that the points which the opposite party had proposed to contest, were not of sufficient importance to justify the continuance of the war on their account.* The king of Prussia we had supported as long as he was likely to be overwhelmed by enemies; but now, by his peace with Sweden and Russia, and by the neutrality of France, he had to contend with Austria only, for which he was fully a match. It was the interest of Britain to save Prussia from destruction, but not to promote her ambition.

The impartial historian, however, who is totally uninterested in the contentions of parties, must differ from both ministry and opposition. On the subject of Prussia, ministers appeared to have judged prudently, as the reason for defending Frederick was the maintenance of the balance of Europe; when that ceased to be in danger, policy no longer required the waste of our blood and treasures in his contests. Concerning the West Indies, our cessions appear by far too great. The reasons alleged by ministers for the dereliction of such valuable possessions, were futile in the present situation and relative force of the parties. *According to their allegations, France would not give up what she had actually lost; but if Britain insisted on the reservation, where were her means of recovery?* The principle on which the cession was justified, was contrary to magnanimous and wise policy. A declared willingness to abandon momentous advantages, rather than continue a contest to secure them when already possessed, directly tended to make the adversary more stubborn, and afford an injurious example in future contests. To a power transcendent in resources, it can never be a prudent reason for relinquishing valuable interests, that they are not to be maintained without a struggle. Such conduct is really as contrary to pecuniary economy on balancing accounts upon a large scale, as to national dignity and honour. The abandonment of acquisitions affording to the possessor riches and naval strength, tended, as was foreseen, to furnish France with the means of maintaining another war whenever a favourable opportunity offered. It was unnecessary to expatiate on the advantages which we secured by our acquisitions in North America, as a reason for giving up the West Indies: such being our power, that we could not only have obtained, but enforced both. Our great efforts had certainly exposed us to considerable difficulties, and lord Bute had been uniformly anxious to terminate the war. Peace was desirable, but the peace concluded was not so honourable or advantageous as Britain could have dictated, and

[Charges against the earl of Bute. Finance. Cider tax.]

contained in itself the seeds of dissolution. The definitive treaty was signed on the 10th of February, 1763, and terminated a war begun by boundless ambition, in which defeat and disaster paid the price of impolitic rapacity, and repeated the lesson which former hostilities had so often inculcated, that France, seeking the extension of territory and the augmentation of commerce and naval power, by attacking England, employed the most effectual means to prevent the attainment of her purpose.

The peace of Fontainebleau, however, though certainly by no means the best which Britain might have concluded in the existing circumstances, produced against its framers obloquy and invectives which they did not deserve. It was openly and loudly asserted, that the earl of Bute entertained the ancient Scotch partiality for France, and intentionally betrayed his king and country.* It was very plainly insinuated, that the duke of Bedford had been actually bribed by the court of Versailles to conclude a peace on such terms.† Improbable as these charges were in their nature, and totally unsupported by any extrinsic evidence, yet during the public ferment they obtained very general credit. The tide of popular odium ran extremely high : demagogues never fail to increase the fury of a populace already inflamed, and on the present occasion an additional subject was not long wanting. The war had made a prodigious increase in the encumbrances of the country, and there was such an arrear of floating debt as to render a very large loan necessary ; the people, however, could not so clearly see the necessity of taxes being no less requisite at the conclusion, than during the continuance of an expensive war. While exulting in victory, and elated with hopes of crushing their ancient enemy, they did not repine at expense ; but now such flattering expectations were terminated by a peace, which was generally disapproved. Ministers were aware, that in such a disposition no scheme of supply would be well received. They therefore determined to impose as few taxes as the public service could possibly admit. The nation, they contended, was exhausted, and it was therefore necessary to repair our finances by the most rigid economy. In pursuance of this plan, they proposed to raise the supplies, first, by taking 2,000,000*l.* out of the sinking fund ; secondly, by issuing 1,800,000*l.* in exchequer-bills ; thirdly, by borrowing 2,800,000*l.* on annuities ; and, lastly, by two lotteries for 350,000*l.* each. The rest of the supplies were necessarily raised by taxes. The principle of taxation under the Bute ministry was, to subject luxuries, and not necessities, to imposts, for the exigencies of the state. The luxuries of the lower ranks, are, on the whole, a much more productive source of revenue, than those of the higher ; it was therefore expedient to include the poor as well as the rich : there were taxes upon beer, ale, and porter directly, and indirectly in that upon malt ; as well as upon wine, on which, in this session, an additional duty was imposed. Cider hitherto had been subject to no impost ; it was judged expedient this year to tax that beverage, though in a less proportion than ale and porter, to which in its nature, and in the situation of its principal consumers, it was held most analogous ; and to levy it by the same mode, an *excise*. Those who examine the nature and operation of different

* See North Briton, and Junius's Letter to the duke of Bedford.

† See Junius's Letter to the duke of Bedford.

[Cause of the unpopularity of excise.]

modes of levying taxes, can very easily perceive, that excise is less burdensome to the consumer than any equivalent raised in customs. Customs, though advanced by the merchant, must ultimately fall on the consumer; as the merchant must not only be reimbursed, but have a profit on all his advance, it follows, that the earlier in trade customs are paid for, any commodity, the heavier they must fall on the consumer. The excise being levied on commodities in use, and paid by the consumer, does not require him to reimburse the merchant for his advance, nor to contribute to his profits. But in customs, the tax being involved in the price of the commodity, is not felt as a tax; whereas excise is immediately felt, and, though really lighter, is imagined to be heavier.* From this unfounded supposition, excise is a much more unpopular mode of taxation, than customs. Two circumstances add to the unpopularity of this species of tax—the necessary procedure of the tax-gatherers, and the established mode of trial. The visits of excise officers, it is alleged, are inconsistent with the rights of an Englishman, according to which his house is his castle; yet it is obvious, that there are many other instances in which that castle must be entered for the public good. The next is, the summary process before commissioners, instead of trial by jury; which is really mercy, and not severity, to delinquents. The expense and delay of prosecutions, either by action or indictment, would fall infinitely heavier on defendants, than this expeditious manner of ascertaining the matter in dispute.† The excise is a much more effectual mode of preventing contraband dealing, than customs: and therefore smugglers are much more interested in abetting the unpopularity to which it is liable from vulgar and inveterate prejudices. From all these causes, every scheme for extending the excise has never failed to excite great opposition and tumult in this country. Sir Robert Walpole's famous scheme, firmly as he was established by the favour of the king and the great whig confederacy, had nearly cost him his place, and was obliged to be abandoned. The enmity to the excise was still undiminished, and was likely to exert itself with redoubled fury against a minister otherwise so unpopular. The cider tax in itself appears to have been as fair and equitable as any that could have been devised; it merely made those who chose to regale themselves with a distillation from apples, contribute to the revenue, as well as those who chose to regale themselves with a distillation from barley: its prudence, however, was questionable. Great and able statesmen will not be deterred from plans of national benefit, by the misapprehension of popular prejudices and ignorance; because they know, that though some of their acts may incur censure, their general measures and conduct, which command the veneration of their countrymen, will ultimately prevail over occasional disapprobation. But lord Bute must have been aware that he was not an object of veneration, since no pains were spared to convince him, that by the majority of Englishmen he was regarded with abhorrence and contempt; that he was the last man who could overbear popular prejudice, however sound the argument might be to justify his financial measures. It was therefore impolitic in him to propose, and still more unwise inflexibly to pursue, this tax, though in itself unobjectionable. He however did persist; and,

* See Dr. Smith's *Wealth of Nations*.

† See Blackstone's *Commentaries*, b. iv. p. 231.

[Unexpected resignation of lord Bute.]

strong as the opposition* was in both houses, loud and violent as the clamours were throughout the kingdom, the bill passed into a law. In pamphlets and periodical publications, and in all popular meetings in the city of London, which were entirely directed by opposition, this act was represented as part of a general scheme formed by lord Bute for plundering England, to gratify the rapacity of Scotchmen,† and for establishing arbitrary power.

While the minister was by numbers considered, and by many more represented, as meditating the most destructive designs to be effected by his power, to the surprise of the public, as soon as his financial measures were passed, he relinquished his employment. "Having (he said) restored peace to the world, performed his engagements, and established a connexion so strong as no longer to need his assistance, he would now depart to the domestic and literary retirement which he loved."

Few ministers have been more generally hated than lord Bute was by the English nation; yet, if we estimate his conduct from facts, without being influenced by local or temporary prejudices, we can by no means find just grounds for the odium which he incurred. It is true, an impartial reviewer can find nothing in his political character to justify the praises of some of his supporters, but still less will be found to justify the obloquy of many of his satirists. As a war minister, though his plans discovered little of original genius, and naturally proceeded from the measures of his predecessor, the general state of our resources, the conquests achieved, and the disposition of our fleets and armies, yet they were judicious; the agents appointed to carry them into execution were selected with discernment, and the whole result was successful. His desire of peace, after so long and burthensome a war, was laudable, but perhaps too eagerly manifested. As a negotiator, he did not procure the best terms which, from our superiority, might have been obtained. His project of finance,‡ in itself unobjectionable, derived its impolicy from the unpopularity of his administration. Exposed from unfounded prejudices to calumny, he deserved and earned dislike by his haughty deportment. The manners which custom might have sanctioned from an imperious chieftain to his servile retainers in a remote corner of the island, did not suit the independent spirit of the English metropolis. The

* The ablest opponent of this tax was Mr. Pitt. That statesman denied the general position of ministers, that the nation was exhausted. There were still resources for carrying on the war longer, and much more towards clearing off incumbrances on the peace. As we were necessarily involved in an immense debt, our wisest policy in such circumstances would be, by liberal and comprehensive grants to add as much as possible to the national income. After discussing in detail the other parts of the financial scheme, he came to the cider tax, against which he directed the force of his eloquence. Mr. Grenville in answer contended that it was unavoidable. Where (said he) can we lay another tax of equal efficiency? does Mr. Pitt tell us where we can lay another tax. He several times repeated, "Tell me where you can lay another tax?" Mr. Pitt replied to him in a musical tone, in the words of a favourite song, "Gentle shepherd, tell me where?" Mr. Grenville ever after retained the denomination of *gentle shepherd*.

† See North Briton, No. 43; Churchill's Poems; History of the Minority; and other popular writings of the time.

‡ His loan was much censured, as affording extravagant terms to the lender, and bestowing the principal shares upon Scotchmen. This charge, however, though in some measure true, was greatly exaggerated.

[Character of his administration.]

respectable mediocrity of his talents with the suitable attainments, and his decent moral character, deserved an esteem which his manners precluded. Since he could not, like Pitt, command by superior genius, he ought, like the duke of Newcastle, to have conciliated by affable demeanour. His partisans have praised the tenacity of lord Bute in his purposes; a quality which, guided by wisdom in the pursuit of right objects, and combined with power to render success ultimately probable, is magnanimous firmness; but without these requisites, is stubborn obstinacy. No charge has been more frequently made against lord Bute, than that he was a promoter of arbitrary principles and measures. This is an accusation for which its supporters could find no grounds in his particular acts; they endeavoured, therefore, to establish their assertion by circuitous arguments. Lord Bute had been the means of disposing the whig connexion of power, and had given Scotchmen appointments which were formerly held by the friends of the duke of Newcastle. To impartial investigation, however, it appears evident that lord Bute merely preferred himself, as a minister, to the duke of Newcastle: if we examine his particular nominations, we shall find that he neither exalted the friends of liberty nor despotism, but *his own friends*. It would probably have been better for this country had lord Bute never been minister; but all the evils that may be traced to that period, did not necessarily proceed from his measures, as many of them flowed from circumstances over which he had no control. Candour must allow that the comprehensive principle on which his majesty resolved to govern, was liberal and meritorious; though patriotism may regret that he was not more fortunate in his first choice. The administration of lord Bute teaches an instructive lesson, that no man can be long an effectual minister of this country, who will not occasionally attend, not only to the well-founded judgment, but also to the prejudices, of Englishmen.

CHAP. IV.

George Grenville prime minister.—Violent writings.—North Briton.—John Wilkes—his character.—Proceedings against him.—Outcry against ministers. Wilkes engrosses the chief attention of the public.—Meeting of parliament.—Animadversions on Mr. Wilkes—he is expelled the commons—in the lords charged by the earl of Sandwich with an impious and immoral libel—withdraws into France to avoid prosecution—is outlawed.—His cause continues popular.—Prejudices against Scotchmen—Churchill's satires—Question on the legality of general warrants—Waved by a ministerial majority.—Mr. Grenville's character and schemes of finance.—His measures for the suppression of smuggling—he intimates a project of taxing America.—Marriage of the prince of Brunswick to the princess Augusta of England.—Prince Frederick, the king's second son, appointed bishop of Osnaburg.—Session rises.—Affairs of Europe.—France experiences the effects of her impolitic wars.—Pecuniary embarrassments and refractory parliaments.—Beginning spirit of liberty.—Austria.—Prussia.—Catharine of Russia.—Election of the king of Poland.—Joseph, heir of Austria, chosen king of the Romans.—American colonies—Effect of the minister's intimation in the colonies.—Meeting of parliament.—The minister's plan for levying stamp duties on America—important debates in parliament thereon—opposed on two grounds, right and expediency—represented as a dangerous innovation against beneficial experience—passed into a law.—Stamp act, an important epoch in history.—Ferment in the colonies—Massachusetts Bay takes the lead in opposition, and instigates concerted resistance.—Annexation of the Isle of Man to the crown of Great Britain.—Indisposition of the king.—Bill for a regency in case of a minority.—Ministers lose the favour of the court—are dismissed from administration.

On the resignation of lord Bute, the honourable George Grenville, brother of earl Temple, became prime minister; lords Egremont and Halifax continued secretaries of state; and the earl of Sandwich was appointed first lord of the admiralty in the room of Mr. Grenville. As the present ministers were all intimately connected with lord Bute, it was believed that his influence continued to predominate, and that his maxims were still adopted. Party rage increased in virulence, and the press teemed with invective. During the administration of lord Bute, government had appeared totally indifferent to these attacks; but an essay published a few days after his retirement, changed its plan. One of the most abusive assailants of the late minister had been the North Briton, which was begun in the preceding year, and being continued periodically, had, at the resignation of lord Bute, sent forty-four numbers into the world; and to this work, the celebrated Mr. Wilkes was an occasional contributor.

John Wilkes, esq., member for Aylesbury, was a man of ready ingenuity, versatile talents, taste, and classical erudition; he was distinguished for wit and pleasantry, and surpassed most men as an entertaining and engaging companion. He was not, however, eminent as a senator or a lawgiver; he was extremely dissipated; as indifferent to religion as to morals, and to his pecuniary circumstances as to either.* Prodi-

* The character of Mr. Wilkes is accurately, justly, and severely drawn, in a celebrated publication of those times, entitled, the Adventures of a Guinea.

[The North Briton. Apprehension of Wilkes.]

gality had ruined his fortune, and profligacy his character. Bankrupt in circumstances and reputation, he had applied to lord Bute to extricate him from his difficulties. His character was so notorious, that a statesman who regarded religion and morality could not patronize him, though he might have easily rendered him a tool. Wilkes in revenge, became a flaming patriot, inveighed against the attacks upon our rights and liberties, and against the unprincipled wickedness of the rulers; and the North Briton was one of the chief vehicles of his animadversions. The observations and arguments in this work were merely declamatory invectives, and the echos of vulgar prejudices, which nothing but popular prepossession could have preserved from contempt. That abuse which preceding North Britons had poured out against lord Bute and Scotchmon, No. 45 had the audacity to direct, with increased scurrility, against the sovereign. The matter was false and absurd; the language used by a subject to a sovereign, was totally unworthy of the pen of a gentleman: the wickedness of the intention, and insolence of the address, deserved detestation; but the frothy feebleness of the execution ought to have overwhelmed that sentiment in contemptuous neglect. The course which ministry pursued gave a consequence both to the paper and its author, which the intrinsic merit of either would never have attained. On the 23d of April, 1763, this number was published, and it was no sooner perused by ministry, than a council was called, and an immediate prosecution proposed. The chief justice Mansfield declared his disapprobation of that mode of procedure: "I am (he said) decidedly against the prosecution: his consequence will die away if you let him alone; but by public notice of him, you will increase that consequence; which is the very thing he covets, and keeps in full view." The contrary opinion, however, prevailed; and on the 26th, a warrant was issued for seizing the authors, printers, and publishers of the North Briton, No. 45. By the law, a general warrant to apprehend all persons suspected, without specially naming or describing any person, was illegal, and, to use Blackstone's words, "void for its uncertainty; for it is the duty of the MAGISTRATE, and ought not to be left to the officer, to judge of the ground of suspicion."* But this mode of procedure, though it was inconsistent with written law, had all the sanctions which it could derive from precedent. It had been used ever since the revolution, and by the successive whig administrations from that time, had never before been called arbitrary, and indeed was nothing but an irregularity. Mr. Wilkes refused to comply with the warrant, but was at last compelled to accompany the messengers to the secretary of state's office; he was committed

* Blackstone's Commentaries, book iv. p. 291. Judge Blackstone, in a note upon this place, explains how such a proceeding, though actually illegal, came to be reckoned justifiable. "A practice had obtained (he says) in the secretary's office, ever since the restoration, grounded on some clauses in the acts for regulating the press, of issuing general warrants to take up (without naming any person in particular,) the authors, printers, and publishers of such obscene and seditious libels as were particularly specified in the warrant. When those acts expired in 1694, the same practice was inadvertently continued in every reign, and under every administration (except the last four years of queen Anne,) down to the year 1763; when, such a warrant being issued to apprehend the authors, printers, and publishers, of a certain seditious libel, its validity was disputed; and the warrant was adjudged by the whole court of king's bench to be void, in the case of *Money v. Leach*."

[Release from confinement. State of the ministry.]

to the Tower. HIS PAPERS WERE SEIZED, and admission to him was strictly prohibited, until a motion was made in the court of common pleas for a writ of *habeas corpus*; by virtue of which, on the 3d of May, he was brought into Westminster hall. That they might have time to form an opinion upon so important a case, the judges deferred decision till the 6th, on which day the lord chief justice Pratt delivered an opinion that did not, as is commonly alleged, declare general warrants to be illegal, but the warrant in question to be void on a specific ground, *the privilege of parliament*. Members of the legislature are exempted from arrest, except in three cases, treason, felony, and breach of the peace; and as neither of these applied to the charge against Mr. Wilkes, he was released by the court. This liberation, on account of parliamentary privilege, was by the popular party construed to be a victory gained by an oppressed individual over an arbitrary government, wishing to crush constitutional liberty. The day before his release, in consequence of an order from the secretary of state to earl Temple, lord lieutenant of Buckinghamshire, he was discharged from the command of the militia of the county; and the attorney-general was directed to commence a prosecution against him for a libel.* Mr. Wilkes not only refused to answer the information which the law officer filed, but on the other hand brought an action against Mr. Wood, under secretary of state, for seizing his papers, and procured a verdict with a thousand pounds damages, and full costs of suit. He also commenced a process against lord Halifax, which, however, subsequent occurrences abated. The proceedings relative to Mr. Wilkes during the year 1763, occupied the principal attention of the whole nation. The popular party represented him as the champion of liberty, and the object of persecution on account of his patriotism. Antiministerial writers directed their efforts almost exclusively to the praises of Wilkes, and the abuse of his prosecutors. Every publication, of which he was the subject, was read with astonishing avidity. Not the populace merely, but men of real talents and virtue, though they detested his profligacy, considering the freedom of Englishmen as violated in his person, associated the idea of WILKES AND LIBERTY.

Wilkes was not slow in availing himself of the popular opinion in his favour. He set up a printing press, and published the proceedings against him at one guinea a copy; by the extraordinary sale of which, he procured a degree of affluence to which he had been long unaccustomed, and a degree of importance which he could never otherwise have established. Finally, he expressed his resolution of making the proceedings against him a subject of formal complaint in parliament.

The ministers who now conducted public affairs were wanting, if not in talents, at least in influence and estimation. Their supposed dependence prevented both respect and popularity; and the proceedings against Mr. Wilkes, which were presumed to originate with lord Bute, rendered

* Lord Temple having supported Mr. Wilkes in combating the prosecutions carried on at the instance of ministers, his lordship also, in officially announcing the dismissal of Mr. Wilkes from the militia, expressed regret for the loss sustained by the county from this resolution. The conduct of lord Temple was so disagreeable to his majesty's counsellors, including his lordship's own brother Mr. Grenville, that he was discharged from the lord-lieutenancy of Buckinghamshire. His lordship continued to support Wilkes; but it was evidently on account of his political prosecution, and not from an approbation of his private conduct and character. See *History of the Minority*; *Universal and Gentleman's Magazines* for 1763.

[Overtures of the king to Mr. Pitt.]

his conceived tools hateful as a body, however meritorious some of the members were individually accounted. George Grenville, a man of sound understanding, with a resolute heart, and fair and unimpeached integrity, had been, during the greater part of his public life, the friend and partisan of his brother-in-law Mr. Pitt; and, though deserving of respect and influence on his own account, had been indebted for actual consideration to his connexion with that illustrious character. His personal importance was by no means sufficient to give strength and stability to a political party, especially to an administration having such formidable opponents. Of his colleagues in office, lord Egremont, by his abilities, experience, and reputation, possessed the greatest weight. Of this statesman's assistance, he, on the 21st of August, was deprived by death; and the cabinet was now reckoned extremely feeble and inefficient.

The object of the king uniformly was, to employ political ability and virtue in the government of the nation, without regard to party. The first statesman of the kingdom had withdrawn from the cabinet; and to recall his most efficacious talents into the executive service of his country, was the benignant wish of our sovereign. He accordingly made application to Mr. Pitt, and an interview took place on the 27th of August. The patriot being consulted respecting measures and men, delivered his opinion freely and explicitly; that in the circumstances and opinions of the times, it would be expedient for the insurance of public confidence, to restore the great whig families to a certain share of that power from which they had been recently driven, and their deprivation of which had caused such alarms in the country. The king did not object to those general propositions, and appointed Mr. Pitt to a second interview on the 29th, to enter into particular arrangements. On the intervening day, Mr. Pitt conferred with the chief whig leaders, and his own political friends, concerning the persons who should constitute the new cabinet, and a plan was formed. The day following, he met the king at the appointed hour, and laid before him the names of his proposed coadjutors. His majesty, desirous of the services of Mr. Pitt individually, was willing to admit in conjunction with him certain members of the whig party; but, true to the policy with which he had set out, would not surrender the whole direction of his affairs to a combination; he therefore proposed a plan which should, together with Mr. Pitt and some of those whom he recommended, extend to others. Mr. Pitt appears to have adhered to his first opinion, and the king to have persevered in his determination not to yield to so exclusive a system of administration. The conference broke off,* and Mr. Pitt and his friends did not become a part of the ministry. Having failed in the attempt to procure the ministerial services of Mr. Pitt on admissible terms, his majesty bestowed a considerable share of power on the duke of Bedford and his partisans, making the duke himself president of the council. The accession of the numerous connexions of the Bedford family gave Mr. Grenville an assurance of a parliamentary majority, which enabled ministers to carry their projects into execution.

* Various reports were disseminated concerning this negotiation. The documents on which it chiefly rests, is the letter of lord Hardwicke to his son lord Royston, afterwards published.

[Parliament. Proceedings against Mr. Wilkes.]

The session opened in November. His majesty having in his speech exhorted parliament to cultivate the blessings of peace, to improve the acquisitions which they had made, to extend the commerce, increase the revenue, and reduce the debt of the country, in the close, he strongly inculcated the necessity of domestic union, and the repression of licentiousness. Before the speech could be taken into consideration, the minister delivered a message from the king to the following effect: "That his majesty having been informed that John Wilkes, esq. a member of that house, was the author of a most seditious and dangerous libel, he had caused the said John Wilkes, esq. to be apprehended and secured, in order to take his trial in due course of law; and Mr. Wilkes having been discharged out of custody by the court of common pleas, on account of his privilege as a member of that house, and having since refused to answer to an information filed against him by the attorney-general, his majesty, desirous to show all possible attention to the privileges of the house of commons, and at the same time solicitous not to suffer the public justice of the kingdom to be eluded, had chosen to direct the said libel, and also copies of the examinations upon which Mr. Wilkes was apprehended and secured, to be laid before them."

The ground which administration took in supporting the proceedings relating to Mr. Wilkes was, a proposition to censure a work as false, scandalous, and seditious, the merits of which were actually before a court of justice; and that very day Mr. Grenville proposed the following resolution: "That the paper entitled the North Briton, No. 45, is a false, scandalous, and seditious libel against his majesty and both houses of parliament, manifestly tending to alienate the affections of the people from his majesty, to withdraw them from their obedience to the laws, and to excite them to traitorous insurrection." In supporting this motion, the friends of ministers expatiated on the nature and mischievous tendency of seditious libels, demonstrated the calumnious falsehoods of the work in question, contended that they were fitted to estrange the affections of the people from the king and legislature, and that therefore the author deserved the strongest marks of censure that could be passed by the house. Opposition endeavouring to extenuate the offence of Mr. Wilkes, contended, that he had been already treated with such illegality and harshness as amounted to persecution; that the decisions of the court had already shown his treatment to have been oppressive; and that his offence, whatever might be its nature or heinousness, was now before the judicature of his country, whose judgment it did not become a branch of the legislature either to anticipate or to influence by interference.

The resolution was carried by a great majority; and immediately after it was resolved, that No. 45 of the North Briton should be burned by the hands of the common hangman; and the lords, in a conference, agreed to the resolution, and to the sentence. On the 26th of November both houses joined in an address, expressing their indignation at the contumely with which his majesty was treated in the libel, and at the outrage which had been offered to every branch of the legislature. The next question relative to Mr. Wilkes was, the extent of parliamentary privilege. Ministry moved, that *the privilege of parliament does not extend to seditious libels*. Opposition argued, that many authorities in law, particularly the late decision in the court of common pleas, established

[He is expelled the house—retires into exile.]

the extension of parliamentary privilege to every case, except treason, felony, and breach of the peace. Mr. Pitt declared his abhorrence of the paper in question to be as great as any man's, "but (said he) let the author be punished in due course of law, according to the amount of his guilt. Do not let us sacrifice the privileges of parliament, and subject every man to the danger of imprisonment who may happen to write against ministry. A member of parliament possesses the privilege claimed by Mr. Wilkes, and admitted by the court of common pleas; but if an offender wished to shelter himself under his privileges, the house, from its regard to justice, would deliver him up to prosecution." The friends of ministry, in reply to the argument, from legal authorities endeavoured to prove, that a libel was a much more hurtful offence than what are usually called breaches of the peace, and even than several species of felony. The privilege of parliament was intended merely to prevent a member from being distracted in his attention to national business, by litigations concerning his private property, but not to prove a protection for crimes. The resolution, after undergoing a very violent contest, was passed, and carried also in the house of lords. During these proceedings, a personal altercation between Mr. Wilkes and Mr. Martin, member for Camelford, produced a duel, in which Mr. Wilkes was wounded; and the house delayed farther proceedings until he should be able to attend.

In the Christmas vacation he retired into France. On the 19th of January, 1764, the last adjourned day for farther proceedings against him, the house received certificates from French surgeons, that, from his wound, he was unable to return to England; but, conceiving this excuse to be an unfounded pretence,* they proceeded with his case. On the 29th of January, it was proposed, "That John Wilkes, esq. member for Aylesbury, being guilty of writing and publishing the North Briton, be expelled this house." In this debate, opposition was very moderate; the evidence was so unquestionable, that the most patriotic members could not conscientiously support the cause of Wilkes. Disapprobation of the proceedings of ministry as illegal and violent, was not incompatible with a thorough conviction of the wickedness of the paper in question, and the unfitness of the author to hold a place in the house of commons; the question was therefore carried in the affirmative, and Mr. Wilkes was expelled the house.

The same day that he was deprived of his seat in the assembly of the commons, he underwent an accusation from the peers. He had written,† and privately dispersed, a book, entitled, *An Essay on Woman*, being a burlesque on Pope's *Essay on Man*, and consisting of obscene and blasphemous ribaldry. To this production he had subjoined notes, stated in the title page to be written by bishop Warburton, so eminent for learning and virtue. The man who first declared his abhorrence of such an offence against decency and piety, was the *earl of Sandwich*. His lordship had recently been extremely intimate with Mr. Wilkes, and had at the very time thoroughly established a character, of which holiness and virtue were not constituents; but he was extremely active in procuring evi-

* He had gone to Paris after his wound: and his return thence, it was apprehended, could not be more impracticable than his journey thither.

† I am aware that the *Essay on Woman* has been ascribed to a different author; but the proof then adduced fixed it on Mr. Wilkes.

[Imprudence and illegality of the proceedings against Wilkes.]

dence to fix this publication upon Mr. Wilkes, in order to bring to condign punishment the violator of morality and religion.* His own habits of intercourse,† and sources of information, peculiarly fitting his lordship for bringing such flagitiousness to light, he procured a copy of the work, and complained of it in the house of peers, as a flagrant outrage against the most sacred duties both to God and man. The peers, on the slightest inspection, saw that it was an infamous performance: and, in the attack upon the venerable, excellent, and illustrious prelate, an evident breach of the privileges of the lords; they therefore addressed his majesty to give directions for prosecuting the author. He was accordingly indicted for blasphemy, while the proceedings respecting the libel were pending. and, on the 21st of February, tried before lord Mansfield, for republishing the North Briton, with notes; and on the same day, for printing and publishing the Essay on Woman. Not returning to receive sentence, he was outlawed; the suits carried on against the two secretaries of course abated; and Wilkes himself might have been forgotten, if another ministry had not rekindled the popular flame.

The votaries of a favourite hypothesis endeavoured to make every fact and case bend to their theory. The people still considered Bute as the real director of affairs, and imputed to his arbitrary principles the acts of the Grenville administration, which they represented as unconstitutional and tyrannical. If considered impartially, the arrest by general warrant is found to be a mere adoption, by this ministry, of the mode followed by all ministries since the revolution. From such a procedure, therefore, no inference can be justly drawn that their intentions were tyrannical; but their conduct was certainly irregular, and was also very unnecessary. If, as a member of parliament, Mr. Wilkes was subject to any warrant for a libel, he was amenable to a special as well as a general warrant. To have arrested him in the legal way, would have been as easy and expeditious as in the illegal. Mr. Wilkes's conduct in itself was a gross violation of law, but to its cognizance the courts of law were fully competent. While it was before these tribunals, it did not appear consistent with either the justice of the minister to propose, or of parliament to adopt, measures that might tend to a prejudication of the case. Conviction must have ensued on such criminality, established by indubitable proofs; and the house might then have proceeded with much greater propriety to censure or punish the author. The impartial historian, though he find in the prosecutors of Wilkes no designs or intentions hostile to constitutional liberty, must perceive, that a considerable part of their conduct was totally inconsistent with prudence, with the stability of their own power, and with the tranquillity of government. Wilkes had before been little known, except for his profligacy; the ministers raised him to eminence; discontent was before very great, and the proceedings against him made it spread with accelerated rapidity. Though not justly deemed tyranni-

* The earl of Chesterfield, in a letter to his son, appears to think equal credit due to the patriotic commoner, and to the holy peer. "Happy (says he) it is for this nation, that God has been pleased to raise up in Mr. Wilkes a patriotic defender of our rights and liberties, and in the earl of Sandwich so zealous a defender of our religion and morals."

† The popular writings of the times on this occasion, applied to the peer a fictitious character, taken from a very celebrated performance.

[Question concerning general warrants.]

cal, the prosecution of Wilkes by the Grenville administration was unwise at the time, and injurious in its consequences.

Though Mr. Wilkes was himself retired from the political stage, questions resulting from his case continued to occupy parliament, and to agitate the public mind. Members of opposition now proposed the question of general warrants in an abstract form, merely as a point of constitutional law, without seeming to involve in it any particular case. On the 14th of February, sir William Meredith moved a resolution, stating, "that a general warrant for apprehending and seizing the authors, printers, and publishers of a seditious libel, together with their papers, is not warranted by law." Ministry conducted themselves with great dexterity concerning this question; for they kept aloof from the position itself, and did not support the legality of such warrants. "The house of commons," they said, "being only a part, and not the whole of the legislature, cannot declare law legislatively; and not being a court of judicature, cannot declare it judicially: the assumption of such a power would introduce confusion into the courts of law. The judges considered themselves as to be guided only by the whole legislature. If the commons were to declare the law, their declarations might be different from what the king and parliament had pronounced. In the present case, it would produce not only general confusion, but particular injustice. There was a bill of exemptions depending before the ordinary judges, on the alleged illegality of general warrants; and the proposed resolution would in a great degree prejudge the cause. It would condemn men who acted upon the most numerous precedents, and of the best times; men whose known characters, and the tenor of whose conduct, had secured them from every suspicion of an ill intention to liberty. Though the words of the resolution extended only to the case of libel, yet the spirit of it would apply to all cases whatsoever. Such warrants had often been productive of the greatest good, and had nipped in the bud the most dangerous conspiracies. If general warrants are illegal, await the determination of the courts; if the decisions of the courts are not satisfactory, declare the law by act of parliament."

The supporters of the motion argued on the illegality and oppressive tendency of the process by a general warrant. Such a mode left a discretionary power over the liberty of the subject; not only to magistrates, whose knowledge, wisdom, and value of their reputation, might moderate the exertion of their arbitrary authority: but to the inferior officers of justice, often the most ignorant and profligate of mankind. The argument from precedent could not justify what was contrary to law. Cases, it was admitted, might occur, in which necessity would justify general warrants; as in time of war and public danger, when issued against the persons and interests of the enemy, they might be requisite for the preservation of the country. Mr. Pitt, in a speech on the subject, acknowledged that he had signed two of them himself, though aware of their illegality, because he would risk his head for the public safety; but in the case of a libel, there was no such necessity; every purpose of public justice might be fully obtained by the regular process of law. The house of commons neither pretended to be the whole of the legislative body, nor a court of judicature; but it was their undoubted right, confirmed by clear and unequivocal precedent, to censure every illegal practice,

[Financial schemes of Mr. Grenville.]

not thereby declaring law, but admonishing courts of justice and executive officers to keep within the limits of law as already established.

Ministers proposed an amendment, stating the constant and uncensured practice of officers. They moved that the question, so amended, should be adjourned to that day four months; that is, should be actually dismissed: and a motion to that effect was carried by two hundred and thirty-four against two hundred and twenty.*

We have hitherto been considering acts of administration which appear to have resulted from their united counsels; we now come to measures, in which the lead was taken by Mr. Grenville himself, belonging peculiarly to his department, and deriving their nature and tendency from his character. Mr. Grenville was a man of a clear and sound understanding, of great parliamentary experience, indefatigable application, and extensive knowledge, especially in the laws of his country, in commerce and in finance. He had adopted an opinion, that the resources of the country were in a very exhausted state; that therefore the chief business of a prime minister was to find out in what way the deficiencies might be supplied. His great object was, the improvement of the revenue without additional burthens on the country. With this view one part of his policy was, to restrain smuggling of every kind, that the established imports might be as productive as possible: in the execution of his schemes he was very active and successful; and farther to promote his purpose, he had recourse to the aid of the officers of the navy. A number of small ships of war, with cutters and tenders, were stationed on the coasts of Britain and Ireland, and similar powers conferred on them with those usually given to revenue officers. Those regulations were a powerful restraint on contraband trade, and added greatly to the productiveness of the revenue. Having thus enlarged the products, he diminished expense by rigid economy. He inquired into abuses which wasted the public money, and, by correcting them, made great savings; in his bargains for the public with monied men, he procured very advantageous terms, and was a most frugal, faithful, and skilful steward to his country.

By these means he was able, in 1764, only one year after the termination of so expensive a war, to come forward with a scheme of finance which precluded the necessity of additional taxes. One part of the debt was 1,800,000*l.* in exchequer bills, which were at a great discount. The bank contract was to be renewed; Mr. Grenville stipulated, that the bank should take 1,000,000*l.* of these bills for two years, at an interest reduced by one fourth; and, at the same time, should pay a fine on the renewal of the contract of 100,000*l.* The residue of the bills were renewed; and another floating debt of 2,000,000*l.* still remained; to its liquidation, the surplus of the sinking fund was applied, and also 700,000*l.* the produce of French prizes taken before the declaration of war. The savings of unnecessary expenses, the increased productiveness of the revenue by the prevention of smuggling, added to the funds before esta-

* Among those who voted with opposition on the present occasion was general Conway, who was presently after dismissed from the command of a regiment, and other military as well as civil employments. This act was severely censured in the opposition writings of the time, and even by not a few connected with no party. This dismissal is the subject of several letters by Horace Walpole, who also wrote a pamphlet upon the subject, entitled, "An address to the public on the late dismissal of a general officer;" which is published in his works.

[Regulations for preventing smuggling. Projects respecting America.]

lished, precluded the necessity, not only of a new loan and taxes, but even of a lottery.

The state of supply was laid before the commons on the 20th of March, and the friends of ministry justly gave it credit as a display of combined skill and economy in the administration of the revenue, and exulted in the effects which it produced; nor were their praises controverted by opposition in parliament. The plan was, however, strongly attacked in anti-ministerial publications, in which it was attempted to be proved, that the statements were fallacious, and the alleged savings frivolous; but the objections were chiefly founded upon hypotheses, while the arguments in favour of the minister were supported by authentic documents; and, indeed, an impartial reviewer of this part of Mr. Grenville's ministry, must allow him the praise due to a prudent and well informed financier.

To promote his favourite object, of increasing the productiveness of revenue, Mr. Grenville extended the collecting powers of naval officers to America and the West Indies. There was a clandestine trade carried on between the English and Spanish colonies, to the great advantage of both, especially the latter, and even of Great Britain herself; because through this channel British manufactures were introduced into the Spanish settlements, and the returns were made principally in gold and silver.* Though this traffic was not contrary to the spirit of any act of parliament, yet the officers of the navy appointed to prevent smuggling, not having received definite instructions from home, put a stop to the intercourse, however beneficial: they seized indiscriminately all the ships employed in this commerce, whether belonging to fellow subjects or to foreigners. The North Americans, who had found this trade extremely lucrative, murmured loudly at the fatal check which it thus received; and Mr. Grenville's laudable desire of increasing the revenue, being pursued too exclusively, produced measures which, though not very important in their financial operations, were followed by political consequences of the highest moment. He formed a plan to oblige the inhabitants of the American colonies to bear a share in the expense necessary for their protection, by paying taxes to be imposed by the British parliament. A distinction had obtained in these provinces, between duties on the importation and exportation of merchandise, and taxes. Customs had been imposed upon certain enumerated goods, if carried to some other place instead of Great Britain; and when specific articles, the produce of one colony, were to be exported to another, they paid a duty.† To these imports, considering them merely as *regulations of trade*, and not as *TAXES*, the colonies had submitted. Mr. Grenville therefore proposed a deviation from the established practice, and the assertion of a claim, which involved in it very important questions, respecting not only general liberty, but also the constitutional freedom of a British subject. Intended by him merely as a scheme of finance upon old and established grounds, his project proposed a political change founded upon new principles, of which experience had afforded no means of ascertaining the operation and effects. It was a much more important and more complicated proposition.

* See Stedman's History of the American war, vol. i. p. 14.

† Rum, sugar, and molasses, for instance, imported from the West Indies to North America, paid a duty before they were shipped; as did also tobacco and indigo, imported from the North American continent to any of the other plantations.

[Innovating system of taxation. Dissatisfaction of the colonies.]

than its author apprehended ; and a plan for making an inconsiderable addition to British revenue eventually laid the foundation of one of the greatest and most momentous revolutions which history has to record.

As a part of this innovating system, Mr. Grenville moved in parliament a bill for granting certain duties on goods in the British colonies, to support the government there, and encourage the trade to the sugar plantations ; and on the 6th of April, this proposition was passed into a law. He also proposed another to the following purport : “ that towards further defraying the expense of protecting and securing the colonies, it may be proper to charge certain *stamp duties* in the colonies.” He postponed, however, during this session, the introduction of a bill founded on the last resolution, that the Americans might have time to offer a compensation for the revenue which such a tax might produce. The colonial assemblies, during the war, had been in the practice of issuing bills, which were made a legal tender for money : these had begun to be attended with great inconvenience, and to suffer very considerable depreciation. To remedy the evils, a law was proposed by Mr. Grenville, and passed by parliament, for preventing such bills as might be hereafter issued in any of his majesty’s colonies or plantations in America, from being made legal tenders in payment of money. The restrictions on the clandestine trade had given great umbrage in North America ; the law obstructing their paper currency added to the dissatisfaction ; but the duties actually imposed upon merchandise, and the resolutions concerning the stamp duty, excited a loud clamour. The New-Englanders were the first to investigate these measures. Conceiving the new laws to be part of a general plan for assuming a power not heretofore exercised by Britain over her American colonies, they immediately controverted the fundamental principle, and totally denied the right of a British parliament to levy, in any form, duties or taxes upon the colonies. The exercise (they said) of such an authority was a violation of their rights as freemen ; as colonists, possessing by their charters the power of taxing themselves for their own support and defence ; and as British subjects, who ought not to be taxed but by themselves or their representatives. These topics were the subjects of petitions sent over to the king, to the lords, and to the commons.

Placed in a rigorous climate, and on a soil requiring active and persevering industry to render it productive, the New-Englanders were strong, hardy, and capable of undergoing great labour and fatigue. Having many difficulties to overcome and dangers to encounter, they were formed to penetration, enterprise, and resolution. Their country, less bountiful than those of their southern neighbours, rendered recourse to traffic necessary. The puritanism which they inherited from their forefathers,* with its concomitant hypocrisy, incorporated itself with their commercial conduct ; and avarice is never keener than after a coalition with fanatical austerity, and never with more ardour uses the ministry of fraud, than when arrayed in the garb of sanctity. The traffic of New-England, of a minute and detailed kind, less resembling the pursuit of an enlightened merchant than a petty shop-keeper, while it narrowed liberality, sharpened artifice. Inheriting a tinge of democratic republicanism, the people submitted with reluctance to the constitutional authority of a

* See the Introduction, p. 32.

[War with the Indians. Defeat of captain Dalzell.]

government in which monarchy made a considerable part, and spurned at the idea of yielding to what they conceived to be usurpation. Avarice being a prominent feature in their characters, they were peculiarly jealous of an apprehended usurpation, which was calculated to affect their purposes. As their sentiments and principles prompted them to oppose such attempts, their intelligent and bold character enabled them effectually to resist them. In the middle colonies, in which the temperature of the climate and fertility of the soil easily afforded the necessities and accommodations of life, though active and industrious, the inhabitants were not equally hardy and enterprising: they were less austere in their manners, admitted luxury and refinement to a much greater degree than the colonists of the north, and were attached to a monarchical form of government. The southern colonies were dissipated, relaxed, and indolent; and therefore, though little adapted to resistance themselves, were well fitted to receive impressions from more vigorous characters. The New-Englanders were extremely active in diffusing their own sentiments through the provinces attached to the mother country; till, at length, the spirit of dissatisfaction became so prevalent, as to attract the notice and animadversions of the British government.

While subjects so interesting and important were agitating the civilized parts of British America, government was disturbed by a desultory warfare with the Indian savages. British settlers had impolitically neglected the means of gaining the affections and confidence of the natives. Seeing England so completely established, the Indians regretted they had not been more active in supporting the French interest. The cordon of forts along the lakes trenced upon their hunting grounds, almost the sole resource of savage life; and they became apprehensive that British colonies would be planted in those woods from which they now derived their subsistence. In the midst of these apprehensions, a report was spread, that the American provinces had formed a scheme for extirpating the Indian tribes; though totally unfounded, this rumour was believed by the natives, and had no small share in inciting them to hostilities. A confederacy was formed, and a sudden attack made, during the harvest, on all our frontier settlements. Before the design was suspected, numbers of planters were surprised, and put to death, with every torture that savage ingenuity could devise; their effects were plundered, their houses burned, and their crops destroyed. The itinerant merchants, who, relying on the general peace, traded in the Indian country, were murdered, and their effects, valued at two hundred thousand pounds, plundered. The western frontiers of Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia, were totally abandoned by the planters; the savages had surprised three of our forts, and were advancing fast to our principal garrison, Fort Pitt. Informed of this alarming irruption, general Amherst sent a strong detachment against the Indians, under captain Dalzell. The savages, however, being apprised of his intentions, attacked the king's troops on every side, and Dalzell, with great difficulty, made his retreat to Fort Detroit. A numerous body of Indians now surrounded Fort Pitt, at which re-enforcements were not yet arrived; the general sent to its relief a strong corps under colonel Bouquet. Informed of the march of this detachment, the Indians raised the siege, with a view to attack the English; and encountering Bouquet's troops, after a sharp contest, pretended to retreat, and draw their adversaries into a most dangerous

[Operations of colonel Bouquet. Riots occasioned by the cider tax.]

ambuscade: the British, however, formed themselves into strong columns, and preserving the strictest order, encountered tomahawks with fixed bayonets; and disciplined valour prevailing over savage impetuosity, they repulsed the enemy. The Indians had again recourse to ambuscade, to which their country is so peculiarly favourable. Our commander wished to bring them to a close engagement; but the enemy with skilful dexterity eluded battle. In his attempts to effect his purpose, Bouquet was drawn into a defile, in which he was extremely distressed for want of water, and saw that, if he were not able to bring the Indians to regular action, his troops must moulder away for want of provisions. The enemy had increased in confidence from their late success; and the colonel perceiving this boldness, contrived the following stratagem for drawing them into battle. The British troops were posted on an eminence, while two companies were stationed in more advanced situations. These he ordered to fall within the circle, as if retreating, while the other two were drawn up so as to appear to cover that retreat. The first two companies moved behind a projecting part of the hill, so as not to be perceived by the enemy. The savages, leaving their woods, attacked the two companies that were nearest them; but while they pressed forward, believing themselves sure of victory, the two that had made the feigned retreat, rushed on, and attacked them in the flank, while the others charged them in front. The savages were defeated and routed; and the British troops arriving at Fort Pitt, secured that important post. The savages now made an attack upon Niagara, and carried four hundred men in canoes across Lake Erie; but these were defeated by an English schooner.

General Amherst, aware that, though the disciplined force of Britain must ultimately triumph over savage ferocity, the inroads of the Indians was a great interruption to colonial prosperity, made such proposals as, by the great influence of sir William Johnstone, were accepted by the principal tribes; and the rest, sensible that they were no longer able to contend with the British, also sought and obtained peace.

At home, little happened of sufficient importance to be a subject of history, except the proceedings regarding Mr. Wilkes, already mentioned. The cider tax, however, occasioned a number of meetings and resolutions, and some riots. The crop had been very deficient, and the dearth of provisions caused great discontent; which was increased by the representations of demagogues, imputing the scarcity in a considerable degree to the influx of Scotchmen,* whom, it was asserted, lord Bute had brought hither to eat the fruits of England. The dissatisfaction in many places rose to tumult. The scarcity also contributed to a different evil, the prevalence of robberies to a very alarming degree: this mischief was farther increased by the discharge of numbers of soldiers and sailors at the peace, who had not since that time got into a regular employment: indeed, at no time were felonies more pregnant, daring, and atrocious.

* The poet Churchill was peculiarly zealous and successful in impressing these ideas on those credulous readers who would receive the colourings of fancy for authentic truth. His writings were highly prized by critics who had not sufficient discrimination to perceive the difference between the acrimony of malignant invective and the strength of well-founded satire; who, to use the language of Johnson concerning another inciter of disaffection, "mistook the venom of the shaft for the vigour of the bow."

[Abuses in mad-houses. State of Europe. France.]

During this year the legislature was informed, that very shameful practices prevailed in private mad-houses. Committees of both houses inquired into the subject, and found that these pretended receptacles for lunatics were very frequently converted into prisons for the confinement, by the authority of private individuals, of persons who had done nothing offensive to the laws of their country; wives who interrupted the debaucheries of their husbands; parents, who chose to manage their own affairs, without implicitly submitting to their children; children, sisters, and wards, who did not implicitly yield to parents, brothers, and guardians; in short, whoever opposed the will of relations assuming despotic power. Individuals, invested with no authority by the law of the land, arrogated to themselves a power not granted by our laws to any part of the executive government. They committed fellow subjects to gaol without an examination: they suspended by their sole will and authority the habeas-corpus act; and in effect established bastiles in Britain. It was found, that the keepers acknowledged this absolute power of individuals; and, without any inquiry, received whomsoever their *lettres de cachet* chose to send in confinement. They admitted and detained persons in their perfect senses, requiring nothing farther than to be paid for their maintenance. The legislature, having investigated this evil and discovered its extent, made regulations to prevent its continuance or renewal.

During this year, two events took place, which were important to the royal family, and consequently to the country. The hereditary prince of Brunswick, who had so eminently distinguished himself in the war, was in January married to the princess Augusta, eldest sister of the king. The bishopric of Osnaburg, which was alternately in the gift of the houses of Hanover and Saxony, becoming vacant, and it being king George's turn, as elector of Hanover, to present, was bestowed upon the infant prince Frederick, second son to their majesties.

Before we revert to the internal and colonial contests which agitated the first portion of the present reign, it seems proper to take a short review of the state of Europe, especially of those parts of it whose acts must always be important to Great Britain.

The alliance between France and Austria had been so far from answering its purpose, that its consequences had left both the contracting parties in an exhausted and depressed state. The family compact between France and Spain, which was intended to exalt, had humbled both kingdoms. In France, internal dissatisfaction interrupted the measures of government for repairing the losses sustained by the war. The immense expenditure of France, both for herself and her allies, had involved her in the greatest pecuniary difficulties, and obliged government to levy very heavy taxes. The parliament of Paris objected to some of the new financial decrees; and force being employed to reduce them to compliance, they resigned their offices. Various representations were made to the king, to justify their conduct. The duke of Fitz-james, governor of Languedoc, imprisoned some refractory members of the parliament of Thoulouse. As a customary mode of procedure with the executorial officers of the king of France, this act might indeed raise indignation, but could not excite surprise; the proceedings of the parliament, however, in these circumstances were unusual, and manifested a deviation from the spirit by which that country had been actuated ever since the esta-

[Austria. Prussia. Rising greatness of Russia.]

blishment of the house of Bourbon. The parliament of Thoulouse impeached the duke, gave orders for the arrest of his person and the sequestration of his estates, and referred the cause to the cognizance of the parliament of Paris, as the supreme court of judicature. That body, accepting the appeal, ordered their president to request the king's presence in the examination. The king replied, that, as the duke of Fitz-james represented his person, he would himself take cognizance of the cause. To this intimation the parliament returned a very strong remonstrance. The death of Fitz-james prevented the dispute coming to issue, but the spirit of resentment which had manifested itself did not evaporate.

Austria had concluded a peace with the king of Prussia a few months after the treaty of Fontainebleau; she had for ever renounced her claim to Silesia, and by her stipulations acknowledged herself to have totally failed in the purposes for which she had undertaken the war. By her ambitious projects she had, during the contest, incurred a debt amounting to twenty-five millions sterling; which was to her an enormous sum. The counsels of her able minister Kaunitz were necessarily occupied in devising means for the diminution of this burthen. One important object she obtained by the treaty of Hubertsburg, in the express consent of the king of Prussia to the archduke Joseph, eldest son and heir of the emperor and empress-queen, being chosen king of the Romans, and the election took place in April, 1764.

The king of Prussia, though he had overcome all his enemies, and dictated the terms of peace, equally able in every department, had been so provident, that AT THE END OF THE WAR HE HAD NOT CONTRACTED A SHILLING OF DEBT, and had even one year's revenue in his treasury.* Frederick, though now at peace, did not relax; he employed himself in cultivating the advantages of tranquillity, reviving industry, encouraging agriculture and commerce, improving his revenue, and rendering his country flourishing.

Russia, though advancing more slowly toward civilization than the ardent genius of czar Peter had conceived, was rapidly increasing in the solid constituents of power. Her military force, arising from such extensive resources, was extremely strong. In hostilities she had commonly been subsidized as an auxiliary, instead of contributing as a principal; hence the wars in which she had been engaged exercised her soldiers without exhausting her finances. Her commerce was extending on every side; not only from her pursuing the schemes of Peter, but from the policy of other countries. During the present century, more than at any preceding period, the nations of Europe had sought maritime strength. Russia was the grand magazine of naval stores: these exports increased her wealth; intercourse with the traders enlarged her commercial ideas, and more strongly impressed on her the importance of maritime force. Her marine was rapidly advancing; and from her various resources she had the greatest influence with nations with which she was nearly connected. Such was the state of Russia when the sceptre fell into the hands of a princess thoroughly qualified by understanding and temper to cultivate the productiveness of the country, improve and multiply its resources, and

See Gillies's Frederick, p. 364.

[Interference of Russia in the affairs of Poland. —Corsica.]

call them forth to beneficial action. The empress Catharine, in the beginning of her reign, appeared so much occupied with her own dominions, as to attend little to foreign transactions; and merely to wish to be on terms of peace and amity with her neighbours, without interfering in any of their contests or concerns. She had made a defensive alliance with the king of Prussia, without embroiling herself with Austria; she was on amicable terms with Sweden and Denmark: she had kept totally aloof from the disputes of the maritime powers, and professed the highest regard for all the belligerent parties, and the greatest satisfaction when their wars were at an end. But at length an event took place, which showed that her ambitious character was destined to display itself in other countries as well as Russia. On the 5th of October, 1763, Augustus, elector of Saxony and king of Poland, died; and his son, the young elector, offered himself as candidate for the throne. The king of Prussia, very anxious to prevent the crown of Poland from becoming hereditary in the house of Saxony, opposed the choice of its present head. The Russian empress joined Frederick in his opposition to the house of Saxony, and recommended count Poniatowsky, a Pole by birth, representative of a powerful and illustrious family, and himself a man of great virtues and accomplishments; and in order to strengthen his interests she sent a powerful army into Poland. Austria, France, and Spain, connected with the house of Saxony, wished success to the elector, but had neither the disposition nor power to employ force in his favour. Branitzky and Radzivil, two Polish chieftains of great power and authority, endeavoured to oppose Poniatowsky, but were defeated, and driven out of Poland; and Poniatowsky was, on the 7th of September, 1764, elected, by the title of Stanislaus II. king of Poland.

In southern Europe a war had subsisted for upwards of twenty years, between the republic of Genoa and the inhabitants of Corsica. The islanders had been at first headed by a German adventurer, whom, trusting to his air-built promises of interesting the great powers in their favour, they chose king, by the title of Theodore king of Corsica. Finding him, however, not to possess the power and influence to which he had pretended, they compelled him to abdicate the throne and retire into banishment. The Corsicans, after this event, chose a native chieftain, named Giacinto Paoli, general of their armies, and president of their councils; and under this commander they were superior to the Genoese troops. After a contest of many years, the senate of Genoa applied to the most christian king for assistance; and in August 1764, a convention was signed between the French and Genoece, by which the king of France guaranteed the island to Genoa, and promised to send a naval and military force to assist in its reduction. The Corsicans applied to the courts of Vienna and London to mediate for them with the French monarch; but nothing was done in their behalf, and the French troops took possession of the principal fortresses of Corsica.

The British parliament met on the 10th of January, 1765. The question of general warrants was early in the season brought again before the house, in a new form, and on the 29th, underwent a very able discussion, in which many ingenious arguments were brought forward on both sides, new rather in detail and illustration than in principle. The speakers of opposition showed the evils which might

[Plan of taxing America. Difference between ancient and modern colonies.]

arise from general warrants in a greater multiplicity of lights than before, and administration enlarged much more than formerly on the impropriety of the interposition of the house of commons in declaring the law of the land: but the real grounds of argument on both sides were and must have been the same, as the subject had been so completely debated in the preceding year. After a very warm contest, it was dismissed by the previous question.

X The deliberations of parliament were now turned towards America. Both the justice and expediency of taxation underwent a discussion, on much more comprehensive principles than in the former year, when the probable efficiency of the tax appeared to be the sole consideration. The petitions and manifestos from the American colonies, denying the right of the British parliament to tax them, being read, the minister submitted the question to the house. A more important subject of discussion had rarely been presented to the British parliament. It was a question, the extent and consequences of which its proposer had by no means digested; it involved the general objects of colonization, the means by which those were to be effected, and the particular constitution, state, and sentiments of the British colonies. In considering this subject, many, by arguing from the practice of parent countries and their plantations in ancient times, were led to very faulty conclusions respecting the question between Britain and her colonies. The motives for colonization have been extremely different in different ages, countries, and circumstances; and from that dissimilitude arose a proportionate diversity of relation and reciprocal interest between the mother country and the plantations. Small states, with confined territories and an increasing population, were frequently obliged to send the surplus of their inhabitants in quest of new settlements. This was the cause of colonial establishments from Phenicia, and from Greece; whose plantations in Asia, Africa, Italy, and elsewhere, were from their nature not dependent on the parent country. They often, indeed, retained a close intercourse with each other, from identity of extraction and language, and similarity of manners and government; but the parent country was far from claiming any authority over its emigrated descendants. This kind of colony resembled the children of a family setting out to seek their fortunes abroad, because they had no means of subsistence at home: settling themselves in a foreign country, subsisted and protected by their own efforts; consequently no longer under the command of the parents, whatever their affection might be for them and their brethren. The colonies of the Romans were planted from other causes, and were, in consequence, on a very different footing. The state, increasing at home in population, and abroad in territories, found conquered countries drained of inhabitants by long wars, but abounding in cultivated land. They therefore sent settlers from Rome* to occupy the lands, which might otherwise have been in a great measure waste from the reduced population. Here the mother country offered comfortable subsistence to her offspring for their industry, and protection for their allegiance. The Roman colonists were not adventurers sent to seek their fortunes with the "world all before them," but children settled by parents in farms entirely de-

* Smith on Colonies, Wealth of Nations, vol. ii. p. 346.

[Principles and system of British colonization.]

pendent on themselves; and these plantations were, and must have been, part of the Roman dominions. Advocates for the taxation of the British colonies, in writings and speeches, quoted the subjection of the Roman plantations; advocates against that system quoted the independence of the Grecian emigrations: although, in reality, neither example would apply. Modern colonies have neither, like those from Greece, been establishments originating in necessary separation, and therefore in their nature independent; nor like those of the Romans, springing from specific donative within the jurisdiction of the donor, and therefore in their nature dependent. They have been settlements formed for the purposes of immediate or eventual gain; and they proposed the accession of resources to the parent country. The great and leading inquiry was, how are these colonies to be rendered most beneficial to a state so circumstanced as their parent country? The plans of different European nations in the government of their colonies, varied according to the general policy of the parent country, the circumstances of the settlements, and the character of particular administrations. The constitution of the American colonies was similar to the polity of Britain, in established provisions for the security of property, liberty, and life; they therefore possessed the right of taxing themselves by their representatives. This was a privilege which the Americans thought inherent in them as British subjects, and confirmed by charters admitted by the mother country; its practical enjoyment constituted a great part of their comfort and happiness; and teaching them to value themselves and their respective colonies, inspirited those exertions which rendered them so beneficial to the British empire. The actual benefits that accrued to England from her colonies, consisted in the increase of people, as the means of security and productiveness were augmented; and in the vast and rapidly growing accession to our trade,* to supply the wants of the multiplying colonies. Commercial benefits were the objects of the plantations; the question, therefore, to be considered simply was, how are these advantages to be most effectually promoted, insured, and improved? It was a mere question of *EXPEDIENCY*, requiring no metaphysical disquisitions about abstract right. Experience showed that our gains had been very considerable, and acquired without murmur or dispute, by the old plan, of profiting from their commerce, and demands for our productions: wisdom had now to determine, whether an adherence to a system of experienced bene-

* This was sir Robert Walpole's view of the subject, declared when, as we have already observed, he was expressing his objections to taxing America. As his opinion was much quoted during the discussion before us, it may not be foreign to our purpose to repeat it in his own words; "I will leave the taxation of America," said he, "for some of my successors, who may have more courage than I have, and be less a friend to commerce than I am. It has been a maxim with me, during my administration, to encourage the trade of the American colonies in the utmost latitude; nay, it has been necessary to pass over some irregularities in their trade with Europe; for, by encouraging them to an extensive growing foreign commerce, if they gain 500,000*l.* I am convinced, that in two years afterwards, full 250,000*l.* of their gain will be in his majesty's exchequer, by the labour and product of this kingdom; as immense quantities of every kind of our manufactures go thither; and as they increase in their foreign American trade, more of our produce will be wanted. This is taxing them more agreeably to their own constitution and to ours."

[Bill imposing stamp duties. Arguments for and against the bill.]

fit daily increasing, or the adoption of new schemes of doubtful operation and certain opposition, was most likely to continue and extend that benefit for which colonies were established.

The British minister preferred the untried theory to the essayed plan; and stated to parliament, that having postponed his scheme of taxation till this session, expecting that the colonies would have offered an equivalent, instead of a compensation they had sent remonstrances. On the 7th of February, 1765, he opened his system to the commons, and in a committee moved fifty-five resolutions for imposing *stamp duties* on certain papers and documents used in the colonies, and introduced a bill grounded upon the propositions.

Of the two parties which opposed government, the duke of Newcastle's was the more strenuous in combating the *stamp act*. The principal leaders among the whig party, in the house of commons, were general Conway and Mr. Dowdeswell. Ministry had now acquired a very powerful auxiliary in the brilliant ingenuity of Mr. Charles Townshend, who had lately come over to their side. The supporters of British taxation asserted, that the colonies had been planted by our care, and nourished by our indulgence; and that as America had been the cause of great expense, it was but reasonable that she should contribute toward the general demands of the empire, as a part of which she was protected. The British legislature (they said) had a right to enact laws for every settlement within the British territories. The Americans, though not nominally, were really represented in the British parliament, and thus were on a footing with many individuals and bodies of Britons, who, having ostensibly no vote in the election of members, were equally included in the provisions of the legislature. The British finances were exhausted by a war begun for the security of the colonies; it was therefore not only equitable that they should contribute, but extremely ungrateful in them to refuse. The nation had contracted an immense debt to give them protection; the navigation act, that palladium of British commerce, had been relaxed in their favour; in short, Britain had treated them as favourite children.

The arguments of the opposers of the *stamp act* were resolved into two heads; the right of Britain to tax America, and the expediency of exercising that right. The sovereign claim of taxation proposed by the pending bill, was totally inconsistent with every principle of freedom; it would undo the security of property, and was contrary to the rights of British subjects. The perfection of the representative system is, that the delegate is placed in the same situation as the constituent, and is bound himself by the laws which he has a share in enacting. In Great Britain, every individual may be said to be virtually represented; as every law and impost extends equally to those who have, as to those who have not votes. The Americans were not even virtually represented, and so far were members of British parliament from being interested in securing the property of the Americans, that, if the right of taxation were admitted, by increasing the burthens of the colonies, they would relieve their own. Such were the arguments used against the right of taxation. On the ground of expediency it was urged, that from the established system we had derived very great benefits, commercial and financial; that the willing

[Consequences of the new system in America.]

contributions of the colonies in demands for our commodities, though circuitously, increased our revenue much more than any direct impost would augment it, since it was already manifest that they would very unwillingly pay. The particular regulations of the act itself also underwent a severe discussion. But, whatever arguments might be forcibly used against taxation as a political system, the stamp act itself, merely as a measure of finance, was liable to little objection. The subjects and duties were extremely clear and definite, so as to preclude arbitrary exactions; simple and practicable in its operations, it would require little expense in the collection; and equitable in its subject, it would fall most heavily on those who were ablest to bear its burthen. It was likely to be productive through the increase of commerce, and consequently of engagements subject to the duty. It bore the character of its author, skilful in finance but not profound in legislative politics. The bill was carried through both houses by a great majority; and, on the 22d of March, passing into a law, became an important epoch in the history of the present reign. The arguments on both sides in parliament were repeated, and enlarged upon in the political writings of the times. Opponents to government represented the act as not only iniquitous in itself, but as part of the general arbitrary system of lord Bute, whose councils they conceived to have still a direction in government. According to their account, the court intended, by subduing the liberties of America, to prepare the way for overturning the constitution of England. These allegations, little as they were justified by facts, were very generally believed by persons already disposed to impute evil designs to the executive government.

The American agents were not slow in transmitting to their respective colonies an account of the stamp act, the opposition that it encountered in parliament, and the dissatisfaction which prevailed in England. Prepossessed, as the colonies were, with a notion that the British government entertained arbitrary designs, they now conceived that America, thus taxed without her consent, was intended for slavery; and they resolved on a vigorous resistance.* They saw powerful opposition in parliament, and displeasure throughout the nation; they, therefore, entertained hopes that parliamentary ability, anti-ministerial publications, and popular clamour, might bring about a repeal; and they were aware that a ferment in the provinces would powerfully promote such a measure. The leaders of all the colonies bestirred themselves to excite the indignation of the people; they published in pamphlets, and circulated in newspapers, arguments against the justice and expediency of taxation, and represented it as the forerunner of slavery. The provincial assembly which first met after the promulgation of the stamp act, was the assembly of Virginia; a colony particularly distinguished for loyalty to the sovereign, and attachment to the mother country and the English constitution. Virginia, indeed, was more remarkable for a sympathy of sentiment with Britain than any of the other provinces, and had received the impression so prevalent in England from the commencement of lord Bute's administration, that the constitution was in danger; and here commenced

* See Stedman's *History of the American War*, vol. i. p. 29.

[Annexation of the Isle of Man to the crown.]

provincial opposition to taxation by the British parliament. The assembly having met on the 29th of May, after a very warm debate, passed resolutions disavowing the right of the British parliament, or of any other body than the assembly of Virginia, to legislate for that colony. The grounds of the disavowal, however, implied their attachment to the British constitution; they rested their claims on their **RIGHTS AS BRITISH SUBJECTS**, declared and confirmed by their charters. The assemblies of the other colonies adopted similar resolutions against the stamp act, which they all concurred in voting to be a most unconstitutional law, and a violation of their rights. The assembly of Massachusetts Bay had, in the preceding year, taken the lead in denying to the British parliament the right of taxation; and now, seeing that the other states were severally strenuous in the opposition, projected a general concert among the colonies. For this purpose they formed a resolution, declaring the expediency of holding a congress to consist of deputies from the several assemblies, in order to consult on the common grievances under which the colonies laboured from the late acts of parliament, and frame and prepare a general petition, with addresses, to the king and queen, and to both houses. Letters sent to the different assemblies communicated this resolution, and invited the other provinces to meet in congress at New York on the 12th of October. Such of the colonial assemblies as met before this period acceded to the proposition, and nominated deputies; but though a great ferment arose through America, yet it did not break out into actual tumult till autumn. The people then threatened to discontinue the use of British manufactures until the stamp act should be repealed: yet the British minister meanwhile acted in such a way as to show that he had no apprehensions of any serious or important opposition to the execution of his financial scheme. He had formed no measure to enforce its operation; from his conduct, it was evident that he considered it as merely a tax, which though it might be somewhat unpopular before it was perfectly understood, would soon cease to be a subject of complaint. He proceeded, therefore, in his favourite pursuit for the good of the revenue.

Mr. Grenville found that the Isle of Man, from its central situation, and its adjacency to such a line of coast, was a great receptacle for smugglers: an evil which could not be thoroughly prevented under its existing government, as the sovereignty was not vested in the crown, but in a British subject. It had originally belonged to the family of Derby; and, by the alliance of a daughter of that house to the family of Athol, had descended to the dukes of Athol. Mr. Grenville proposed a bill for annexing the sovereignty to the crown of England, leaving to the duke the estates which he possessed in the island, and indemnifying* him for the rights that he was required to relinquish.

* The terms granted to the duke of Athol were 70,000*l.* besides a pension for life to himself and to the duchess. As the bargain, on the part of his grace, was a compulsory sacrifice to the good of the state, on every principle of justice between sovereign and subject, he ought to have received very full indemnification. It was alleged by the duke's friends, that the compensation was not adequate. His son and successor, the present duke, having afterwards personally examined and inspected the state and resources of the island, and the advantages of which his family had been deprived, applied for a modification and amendment of the present bargain; but this belongs to a much more advanced period of the history.

[Indisposition of the king. Regency bill.]

The bill was passed on the 10th of May, and followed by laws for preventing illicit trade.

Several causes now combined to weaken and distress administration. The stamp act was very unpopular in its principle, and still more obnoxious from the apprehensions that were entertained of its effects. The threats of the Americans to abstain from the use of British manufactures, caused a great alarm among manufacturers, merchants, and ship owners: and this alarm naturally spread among all the mechanics and labourers dependent on those three classes. While afraid that they would be deprived of work, they had another subject for dissatisfaction in the scarcity of bread, and high price of provisions: evils to which they were exposed during the whole of this year, and which created great discontent and clamour. Although the dearness of these necessary articles could not justly be attributed to ministry, yet by the populace it was charged to their account.

With these causes of popular discontent, a measure relating to the royal family co-operated in accelerating the downfall of the Grenville administration.

Toward the close of this session, the king having been indisposed, a very great alarm took place, from the general affection with which his majesty's virtues were regarded, and also on considering the long minority which must have taken place if the termination had been fatal. The king, on his recovery, having gone to the house, in his speech took notice of his illness, and said, "that though not attended with danger, it had led him to reflect on the state in which his family and country would be left, should it please heaven to put a period to his life while his successor was of tender years. For that reason he recommended to parliament to make such provision as would be necessary, should any of his children succeed to the throne before they respectively attained the age of eighteen years;* and proposed to their consideration, to empower him to appoint, by instruments in writing, under his sign manual, either the queen, or any other person of the royal family usually residing in Great Britain, to be the guardian of the person of such successor and the regent of these kingdoms, until such successor should attain the age of eighteen years, subject to the same restrictions as had been provided by a regency act which had been passed on the death of the late prince of Wales." A bill was proposed in the house of lords, in consequence of his majesty's recommendation, that the council of regency should consist of the dukes of York and Gloucester, his majesty's brothers; the duke of Cumberland, his uncle; princes Henry Frederick† and Frederick William, the king's two youngest brothers; and the chief officers of state for the time being. A question arose in the house, who are the royal family? The law lords explained it to be the descendants of George II.; ministry acquiesced, and the bill passed the house of lords. According to this interpretation, no one could be named regent, except the queen or some one sprung from George II.; her royal highness the princess dowager of Wales, therefore, was not included. In the house of commons this omission was construed to be an

* See his majesty's speech, state papers, 1765.

† Late duke of Cumberland.

[Unpopularity of the administration.]

indignity to her royal highness ; and a motion was made, that the name of the princess should be inserted immediately after the name of the queen. This amendment being admitted, the bill was returned to the peers, and so it passed into a law.

The administration having never been popular, was now become very obnoxious ; and temporary and incidental distresses were imputed to their misconduct and evil designs. Complaints had for several months prevailed among the silk weavers that their employment had been greatly injured by the encouragement bestowed on French manufactures. Near the close of the session, their murmurs rose to tumultuous expostulation ; and in numerous bodies they surrounded the palace and the houses of parliament, and presented a petition for the redress of their grievances. A mob once collected, from whatever cause, rarely confines itself to just, legal, and constitutional operations ; these persons therefore proceeding to various outrages, were at length repressed by the interference of the military, who were called in to assist the civil power in the re-establishment of order and tranquillity. Inimical to ministry, great numbers of the people and some of the popular leaders ascribed the ground of complaint to their misrule, and severely censured the means that were necessarily employed for the suppression of the disorders.

Other circumstances now co-operated with the popular enmity to administration. The cabinet had evidently lost the favour and confidence of the sovereign. The framers and supporters of the hypothesis concerning the secret supremacy of lord Bute, ascribed the declension and decay of their influence to the suggestions of the alleged favourite. According to this theory, Mr. Grenville and the duke of Bedford had not been such subservient tools to what was styled the interior cabinet or secret junto, as was expected and required, and had frequently thwarted the sovereign and his private friends and counsellors both in measures and appointments. The popular party asserted the omission of the princess dowager's name in the first bill of regency, to have been regarded by the court as an intended insult, and as such to have been resented. But it has never been *PROVED* that lord Bute retained the alleged power and influence ; and therefore no conclusion founded on such a supposition can be admitted as historical truth. That the king might be more attached to some individuals than to others, independently of their political qualifications, is no less probable, than that a sovereign should have the affections of another man. It is equally natural and allowable, that a monarch should wish to promote the interests and aggrandizement of the objects of his attachment, in preference to indifferent persons. The duty of his situation precludes not the bestowal on his friends of offices of honour or emolument, for which they may be respectively qualified. In the many departments of executive service, there are offices which do not require an equal degree of ability and effort as others. Places of high trust a patriotic sovereign will bestow, to the utmost of his power, on the fittest that can be found for promoting the public benefit ; but there are many other subordinate appointments which, without detriment to the public good, may be given according to private favour. Agreeably to the principle and rule which directed his choice of ministers from the beginning, the king chose his chief official counsellors ; but

[Dismissal of the Grenville administration.]

some offices of less importance he was willing to bestow according to his own predilection. It appears, that after the duke of Bedford had firmly established himself and his partisans, one of his chief objects was to extend his own patronage by donatives to his creatures; that he strongly thwarted his royal master;* and that the other chief members of the cabinet joined in his unaccommodating and refractory opposition. Hence was thought to be derived their procedure in the regency bill; and at the close of the session, ministers possessed no more favour with the king, than they had enjoyed with the people from the commencement of their administration. Various conferences took place between the chief ministers and the sovereign, respecting their continuance in office; at length, according to general and uncontradicted report, the duke of Bedford presumed to use such language to his sovereign, as could not possibly be tolerated;† and, as his colleagues adhered to the president of the council, the administration was dismissed.

Mr. George Grenville's ministry has eventually proved a very important era in the history of this reign. He himself was a man of good understanding and upright intentions; possessing, however, that species and degree of ability which may be of great public service in the ordinary course of affairs, he by no means rose to that genius which can adapt its exertions to situations untried ‡ Besides, the new circumstances which Mr. Grenville encountered, were of his own creation; he assumed an hypothesis, that the country was so much exhausted as not to have the means of adequate revenue without a new source; but his theory was demonstrably erroneous: such a revenue was raised as, exclusive of America, and during the continuance of peace, annually reduced the national debt. Industrious as Mr. Grenville showed himself in his inquiries, and accurate in financial calculations, as a politician he proved himself not equal to the situation in which he was placed. His projects to produce a partial increase of revenue drove the colonies to disaffection, and generated a fatal political change, without obtaining the revenue which he sought, and which might have accrued circuitously to the country if he had left the subject untouched. Mr. Grenville has been charged with being the tool of lord Bute to establish absolute power; but his conduct affords no ground to justify the imputation of unconstitutional views. The proceedings respecting Wilkes were rash and precipitate, but interfered no more with liberty than the measures of every minister had done since the revolution. His schemes of finance, on which, including American taxation, the merits of his ministerial character rest, display an industrious man, of official habits and experience, conversant in details, without rising to the general principles of political economy; but neither in their plan nor execution do they manifest ar-

* See Life of lord Chatham; History of the late Minority; and Junius's Letter to the duke of Bedford. "After two years submission (says Junius) you thought you had collected a strength sufficient to control his influence, and that it was your turn to be a tyrant, because you had been a slave."

† See political writings of 1765, *passim*; also Junius's Letter to the duke of Bedford, in a note.

‡ See the admirable character of Grenville, drawn by Mr. Burke, in his speech on American taxation.

[Political character of Mr. Grenville.]

bitrary intentions. In his acts he did not conceive himself to be violating the rights of British subjects; and in his measures for the operation of his acts, he showed no intention nor disposition to give them effect by force. Authentic history is not justified in exhibiting him as the promoter of arbitrary power; but the reviewer of his administration, allowing him the credit of an upright public steward, will discern that he was not a consummate statesman, and must regret that political measures most fatal to this country originated in the ministerial projects of Mr. George Grenville.

CHAP. V.

His majesty continues to desire a ministry unconnected with party politics.—Applies through lord Bute to Mr. Pitt for that purpose.—Mr. Pitt's propositions deemed by the sovereign inadmissible.—Frustrated in his grand object, the king commissions the duke of Cumberland to form a ministry.—The marquis of Rockingham and the whig party come into office.—New ministry court the popular favour—but want the support and co-operation of Mr. Pitt.—Sudden death of their patron, the duke of Cumberland.—Change in administration encourages in America opposition to the stamp act.—Colonial concerts and associations against British commodities.—Outcry in Britain against the stamp act.—Meeting of Parliament.—American affairs chief subjects of ministerial consideration.—Minister's plan, a declaratory law, reserving the right of taxation and the repeal of the stamp act—plan adopted—declaratory law passed—repeal of the stamp act.—Rockingham's system shows good intentions, but temporizing policy.—Series of popular acts.—Plan for the government of Canada.—Change of ministry.—Mr. Pitt receives full powers to form a new administration.—View of affairs in British India, from the close of the war with France to the grant of the Dewanne.—Character of the system pursued by the company's servants in India at this period.

WHEN the Grenville administration was drawing to a close, offers had been again made to Mr. Pitt, but that illustrious statesman, considering solely the good of his country, and proposing ministers to be appointed merely for their fitness, made no allowance for particular predilections, would not accede to any terms short of a complete change of men, measures and counsels, and would not even gratify the court by leaving to its appointment the subordinate offices. His majesty did not deem it expedient to purchase at such a price even the services of Mr. Pitt. The agent in this last negotiation had been the duke of Cumberland, who was now employed by the king to form a new ministry. The duke had himself been much connected with the whig party; of which the duke of Newcastle being far advanced in years, the marquis of Rockingham, an upright, amiable, and well disposed nobleman, of very great fortune, was now reckoned the head. His highness, not having succeeded in his application to Mr. Pitt, made proposals to the marquis of Rockingham, which he, without any communication with that great man, accepted. The marquis of Rockingham was made first lord of the treasury, the duke of Newcastle lord privy-seal, Mr. Dowdeswell chancellor of the exchequer, the duke of Grafton and general Conway principal secretaries of state, and the earl of Nottingham chancellor.

This administration, considering itself as the whig confederacy, which had in two preceding reigns possessed the direction of affairs, appeared determined to proceed upon the whig principles, and to court popular favour; for ability or political experience none of the principal ministers were distinguished. The severest accuser of lord Bute would not pretend that the marquis of Rockingham was raised for his wisdom, any more than his lordship; so far, however, as pleasing manners and whig principles, with moderate talents, fit a man for conducting the affairs of a great nation, the marquis was qualified

[Death and character of the duke of Cumberland.]

for being prime minister. This cabinet did not at first attain the popularity which its members expected from the appointment of a whig connexion. Why, said the city of London and other numerous bodies, is not Mr. Pitt at the head of affairs? The marquis of Rockingham may be a very well disposed man, but what are the proofs of his political capacity and of his being able to remedy the many evils that have befallen this country since the resignation of Mr. Pitt? The public had in fact, without perceiving it, undergone a change of opinion as to the constituents of a beneficial administration. Men no longer considered the question, Is or is not the minister connected with the great whig families? but, Is he or is he not fit for conducting the business of the nation? It was apprehended that the whig party had made its peace with the secret junto by which, according to the prevailing popular hypothesis, the country was governed. The chief prop of this ministry was the duke of Cumberland, who was himself a most zealous whig, with all the principles, sentiments and prejudices which had distinguished that party during the reign of his father and grandfather; but this advantage they did not long enjoy: on the 31st of October his royal highness died suddenly of an apoplexy, in the forty-fifth year of his age.

William Augustus duke of Cumberland was a man of very respectable and amiable moral qualities. In the private relations of life, his conduct was highly meritorious. He was an affectionate brother and uncle, a mild and generous master, a sincere and ardent friend, and a zealous well wisher to the interests of his country. He was charitable to the poor, liberally bestowed alms on those who could not work to earn their bread, and devised a variety of employments for those who could labour. He was a brave, intrepid soldier; and if, as a general, he was not very successful, his disappointments could not be imputed to want of resolution, activity, or enterprise. His campaigns in Flanders were, no doubt, less successful than the expectation of the country anticipated; but those were too sanguine. It was not considered that his highness, when commander-in-chief of the allied army, was only four-and-twenty years of age, with few antecedent opportunities of military experience, and had to combat marshal Saxe, one of the first generals of the time, at the head of a more powerful army than France had ever before brought into the field. His conduct during the rebellion met with great praise. The severities that followed (and which the perverse malignity of jacobites styled cruelty, and no doubt exaggerated,* in order to render the heroic prince unpopular) were perhaps salutary and beneficial. Fortune does not always attend the brave. The campaign which ended at Cloisterseven certainly was not successful: his highness's retreat, however, saved a number of brave men, who might have been destroyed by the French, had he been rash enough to continue the contest. His cautious prudence preserved an army destined to victory under another general, and actually laid the foundation of prince Ferdinand's suc-

* The report generally prevalent in Scotland, concerning the sufferings of rebels not brought to trial, are so totally inconsistent with the mild and benevolent character of the royal general, and are founded on suppositions so repugnant to law, justice, and common humanity, that they carry with them intrinsic evidence of their falsehood.

[Proceedings in America. Congress at New York.]

cesses. His highness, after this event living in retirement, was eminent for the exercise of the private virtues ; and so liberal, munificent, and kind was he to all within the sphere of his influence, that, although historical readers may perhaps not immediately discover in his life the ground for his usual title of the GREAT duke of Cumberland, they can in every part of his character find facts to justify the application of the GOOD duke.

When the change of ministry became known in America, the spirit which had been long gathering burst into open violence ; first and principally at Boston, and afterwards in several of the other colonies. At Boston the fury of the populace was directed against the officers of the crown ; both those who were supposed friendly to taxation in general, and those who were appointed for executing the stamp act. Their houses were pillaged, their furniture was destroyed, their official papers were committed to the flames, and only by concealment did they save their persons. The governor assembled the council of the province, and found no inclination in them to suppress the riots.* He attempted to muster some companies of militia in order to keep the peace ; but they refused to obey his orders. The stamp officer, seeing the danger of the employment which he was required to exercise, resigned his office. In the other colonies the disorders were not so outrageous as at Boston, but were sufficiently violent to frighten revenue officers from collecting the duty on stamps. No duty was levied, and the act was completely inefficient. Deputies from nine of the thirteen colonies met at New-York, on the first of October 1765, to hold a general congress.† After having spent several days in debate and deliberation, the delegates drew up a declaration of the rights and grievances of the colonies. Respecting the first head, their *rights*, they proceeded more on the moderate principles of Virginia and the middle colonies, than on the violent republican ideas of New England ; the rights which they asserted, they claimed as British subjects, and according to the British constitution. The declaration set forth, that they owed the same allegiance to the sovereign as the people of Great Britain, and all due subordination to parliament ; that they were entitled to the same rights, privileges, and immunities, as their fellow subjects ; that no taxes could be imposed upon free-born Britons, but by their own consent, or that of their representatives ; that the colonies were not, and could not be, represented in parliament ; that the only representatives of the inhabitants of the colonies were those that were chosen by themselves ; and that no taxes had been or could be imposed upon them but by their representatives ; that all supplies to the crown were free gifts from the people ; that, therefore, it was unreasonable in the British parliament to grant the property of the inhabitants of

* See Stedman's History, p. 39.

† " The four colonies not represented in this congress were, New-Hampshire, Virginia, North Carolina, and Georgia. From the last three of these, deputies were not sent, because the letters from Massachusetts Bay arrived during the recess of their assemblies, which were not afterwards permitted to meet till the 1st of October had passed : and in New-Hampshire, the assembly did not think fit to appoint deputies, although they approved of the holding of a general congress, and signified an inclination to join in any petition that should be agreed upon by the deputies of the other colonies." See Stedman's History, vol. i. p. 39.

[Resolutions against imports from Britain. Plans of administration.]

the colonies; and finally, that trial by jury was the right of a British subject. They next proceeded to their *grievances*: the stamp act tended to subvert the rights and liberties of the colonies; the duties imposed, unconstitutional in their principle, were oppressive in their operation, and the payment impracticable; the British manufactures, which they were in the habit of purchasing, contributed greatly to the revenue; the restrictions imposed by the late acts would disable them from purchasing these articles, and consequently would materially injure the revenue; the increase and prosperity of the colonies depended on the free enjoyment of their rights and liberties: and these considerations of right and expediency they had firmly, but respectfully, urged in memorials and petitions to the king and both houses of parliament.

Besides the actual resolutions formed, an important point was gained by the meeting of this congress, in the establishment of a correspondence and concert between the leading men of the several colonies; which paved the way for a combination, should future circumstances render their joint efforts necessary or expedient. The moderation of their proceedings, the alleged grounds of their claims, the fairness of their professions, and the apparent respectfulness of their statements to the king and parliament, manifested a sound policy, much more formidable than tumultuous violence. Associations were formed for prohibiting the importation of British manufactures until the stamp act should be repealed. On the 1st of November, when the act was to commence, neither stamps nor distributors were to be found. Commerce was at a stand, because the instruments were wanting that were now to legalize its transactions. The civil courts could not proceed for the same reason. The customs could not be levied: in short there was a general stagnation of business; and Mr. Grenville's scheme of taxation, so far from improving the revenue, obstructed one of its principal sources.

In Britain, great clamours arose against the stamp act, and the manufacturing and mercantile interests promoted petitions for its repeal. The colonies were represented as grossly injured, and the violence which had been committed was imputed to despair. Britain itself was in a distressed situation; manufactures were at a stand, commerce was stagnant, provisions were at an enormous price, and a numerous populace without the means of procuring a livelihood. A great part of our evils was imputed to the situation of America; and from that cause, commercial difficulties were likely to increase; as vast sums were owing to British merchants from the colonies, which the debtors declared an inability to pay in their present situation.

American affairs were the chief objects that engaged the attention of the Rockingham administration, whose situation was extremely delicate and embarrassing. On the one hand, the Grenville party, the devisers of American taxation, and the framers of the stamp act, insisted on coercive measures: on the other, Mr. Pitt and his adherents disavowed the right of taxing America, and acquiesced in the revenue circuitously derived from her by commerce. Ministry proposed to steer a middle course, which they thought would neither precipitate disturbances in America by the rashness of their counsels, nor degrade the dignity of the crown and nation by irresolution and weakness. Mr. secretary Conway wrote letters to this purport to the

[Meeting of parliament. Evidence of Dr. Franklin.]

governors of the chief colonies, expressing at the same time a disposition to grant relief to grievances, and to vindicate the rights of the British crown and parliament. He recommended to them to try lenient measures ; but if they should fail, to use the force with which they were intrusted.

Parliament met on the 16th of December, 1765 ; when his majesty in his speech took notice of important occurrences in America. He stated, as a reason for assembling the parliament before the holidays, that numerous vacancies* had taken place in the house of commons, which he wished them to have an opportunity of supplying, that they might proceed after the recess to a great variety of important affairs. On the 14th of January, 1766, they met after the holidays ; his majesty again, in his speech from the throne, treated chiefly of American affairs, and recommended such a temperature of policy as might restore harmony to the colonies, without detracting from the rights of Britain. This was the middle course which ministry adopted, and by which they hoped to satisfy both the promoters and opposers of American taxation. The beginning of the session was employed in examining a great variety of petitions both from Americans and from British merchants and manufacturers ; the object of which was, to establish the evils that resulted from the stamp act. The original proposers of the tax contended, that these petitions were procured by ministerial artifice ; but that, even if trade had suffered to the degree alleged in those petitions, it would be better to submit to a temporary inconvenience, than by a repeal of the act to hazard the total loss of British supremacy.

To ascertain the grounds of the petitions and complaints, and also other important facts respecting the colonies, witnesses were examined by parliament ; and of these, the most distinguished was Benjamin Franklin. Bred a printer, this extraordinary man, through genius and industry regulated and directed by judgment, rose to a high pinnacle of physical discovery : he soon showed, that the mind which could elicit fire from the heavens, could converge and reverberate the rays of moral and political light. He had visited and inspected the greater part of the colonies, was well acquainted with the best informed and ablest men in all, and none was conceived more accurately to know the circumstances of the colonies and the dispositions of the people, or more able to comprehend the policy which in such circumstances and dispositions would be most suitable and beneficial. Highly estimated among his countrymen, he had been appointed the provincial agent for representing to the British government the evils that must accrue from the new system of taxation. The Grenville ministry little regarded statements tending to demonstrate the impolicy of their own measures. By the Rockingham administration his accounts were very differently received, and he was called to give evidence before the house of commons. His testimony tended to prove, that the colonists were well affected to the parent country, and considered the interests of Britain and America so closely connected, that they could not be separated without the greatest loss to both parties. Impressed as they were with this truth, and attached to the parent country, theirs was the affection of British subjects, enjoying

* By the new appointments and the change of ministry.

[Arguments of the opponents and advocates of American taxation.]

constitutional rights : the new system of taxation and the stamp act they deemed flagrant violations of those rights, and would not submit to the present act, or any other proceeding from the same principle, unless they were compelled ; a conciliatory system, therefore, beginning with the repeal of the stamp act, would re-establish tranquillity and harmony. Such was the substance of Franklin's evidence ; and from its intrinsic probability and consistency, as well as the character of the witness, it made a very strong impression both on parliament and the public.

Those who were friendly to a repeal consisted of two parties : the friends of ministry, who maintained the right of American taxation, although they supported the expediency of rescinding that particular act ; and the votaries of Mr. Pitt, who entirely denied to parliament the right of taxation. The question resolved itself, therefore, into two divisions : 1st, whether Britain possessed the right of taxing the colonies or not ? 2dly, whether the stamp act was or was not expedient ? The first question depending chiefly upon great and constitutional principles, afforded an ample field for political reasoning. The deniers of the right of taxation, after prefatory remarks on the nature and end of government, and the component principles of just and beneficial polity, took a view of the constitution of England in the means that it has established for levying taxes. Tracing our history up to the earliest times, and pursuing it downwards, they contended that no British subject had been taxed but by himself or his representatives : and that this right the planters of colonies carried with them when they emigrated, not as a specific charter granted to those colonies, but as a general right of British subjects. The operation of this right they illustrated in a great variety of instances ; they endeavoured at the same time to make a distinction between what they called external duties, that is, restrictions on commerce ; and internal, to be levied on the body of the people. They adduced various arguments from the practice of ancient states ; and quoted modern instances of the impolicy of coercive measures and taxation on colonies.

The arguments in favour of taxation were less forcible, though more extensive and detailed, and supported by a great variety of alleged precedents as well as instances. The British constitution was in a fluctuating state ; and many things which were once constitutional were no longer so now. Various taxes had been raised, contrary to law, by forced benevolences, ship-money, and other means ; and the connexion between the representation and taxation could not stand the test of historical inquiry : representation was very arbitrary and accidental ; whereas taxation was general. There was in the different colonies a diversity of forms and regulations, which all showed the jurisdiction of the mother country, exerting itself as might best answer the circumstances of the case ; and heretofore duties had been levied without the least opposition. The navigation act shut up their commerce with foreign countries ; but did they ever question the legality of that act ? Their ports were made subject to duties which cramped and diminished their trade, yet it never was maintained that this impost was illegal. The distinction between internal and external taxes was totally unfounded ; if a tax were laid on any article at the ports of New-England, Pennsylvania, Virginia, or any other colony, its operation would be as much felt as if it were raised in the in-

[Speech of Mr. Pitt. Repeal of the stamp act.]

land part of the country. Respecting the representation in parliament, the Americans were as much represented as the greatest part of the people of England. America, it was alleged by the Grenville party, never could have objected to taxation, unless they had been encouraged by the seditious doctrines, recently so prevalent in England. The question was not now, what *was* law, and what *was* the constitution? but, what *is* law, and what *is* the constitution? If a practice had generally prevailed, had been held to be law, and never had been questioned, as a number of precedents proved this to be, it became law and the constitution by that very admission. Various statutes respecting Chester, Durham, and other places, were quoted, particularly by Mr. Grenville, to support the practice of taxing without representation. Protection and obedience were reciprocal: we protected America, therefore she was bound to obey this country, and she must either obey in all points, or in none. When was America emancipated? Was she not still dependent on the mother country?

Mr. Pitt, who had spoken with his usual ability on the opposite side, replied to Mr. Grenville, and demonstrated the absurdity of arguing on judicial precedents in great questions of legislative policy. "I come not here (he said) armed at all points with law cases and acts of parliament, with the statute book doubled down in dogs ears, to defend the cause of liberty but for the defence of liberty, upon a general constitutional principle; it is a ground on which I stand firm: on which I dare meet any man." He contended, that if America had yielded to taxation by the British parliament, in which she was not represented, she would yield to slavery; and that a myriad of judicial decisions could not make slavery liberty, nor agreeable to the constitution of England. He insisted that there was a difference between internal and external taxation; the first being imposed for the express purpose of raising a revenue, and the second for that of regulating commerce. Mr. Grenville had asked, when were the colonies *emancipated*? "When (said Mr. Pitt) were they made slaves? America has produced to this country, through a trade in all its branches, a revenue of two millions a year: this is the price that America pays you for protection. Are the proceeds of the stamp act to indemnify us for the loss of that revenue? and, as she has shown a determination to resist, how are you to render your stamp act efficient? Is it by force? force will destroy the value of the object for which you are contending: the event will be extremely precarious, and even success destructive: if America falls, she will fall like the strong man, and with her pull down the pillars of the constitution." On these grounds, he proposed that the stamp act should be absolutely, totally, and immediately repealed.

Ministry introduced a prefatory bill, declaring that Britain had a right to tax America. The declaratory act passed in the beginning of March; and on the 18th the stamp act was repealed, by a majority of 275 to 167.* Some time after, another bill was passed to indemnify those who had incurred penalties on account of the stamp act.

The great object of the Rockingham ministry appears to have been popularity. The cider tax had been most undeservedly unpopular. To court the favour of the people, they proposed and procured the repeal of this tax, though equitable and productive. Resolutions of

* See parliamentary journals.

[Overtures to Mr. Pitt for the formation of a new ministry.]

the house were passed, declaring the illegality of general warrants and the seizure of papers. They proposed and procured an act for restraining the importation of foreign silks, and thereby excited the joyful gratitude of the English manufacturers. The price of corn still continuing high, provisions were made for preventing monopoly and exports, and procuring, by importation, a more liberal supply. They promoted the extension of trade, especially by a commercial treaty with Russia. Notwithstanding these popular and beneficial acts, the ministry could not acquire credit, strength, and stability. The votaries of the hypothesis concerning secret influence represented them as the tools of lord Bute, who employed them until a more efficient cabinet could be formed, and would soon abandon them when no longer necessary for his purpose. The partisans of Mr. Pitt, and those who from patriotism wished the reins of government to be placed in the ablest hands, desired that he should be prime minister; and before the termination of the session, a great majority of the nation wished and expected a speedy change of ministry. Their immediate dissolution is generally believed to have been accelerated by the chancellor Northington. After the prorogation of parliament, ministers projected a plan for the civil government of Canada. The new system proposed to leave to the natives their ancient rights of property or civil laws, and to temper the rigour of their criminal code by the more equitable and liberal system of English jurisprudence. The chancellor represented the scheme as theoretical, visionary, and totally unworthy of practical statesmen; and declared he could no longer be member of so incapable an administration. His majesty was convinced of their incompetency to carry on with beneficial effect the functions of administration. He made overtures to Mr. Pitt, containing ample powers to form a ministry, and on the 12th of July the administration of the marquis of Rockingham terminated.

Rockingham's ministry had been formed on a principle which prevailed during the greater part of the two preceding reigns. It was composed of what was called *the whig connexion*, but certainly showed neither ability nor efficiency that could make it permanent. The extraordinary powers of Burke, which were employed in its defence, endeavoured to impute its dissolution to the interior cabinet, the existence of which he assumed, and the fancied operation of which he described with such strength and brilliancy.* But it really fell from its own weakness: in the most important offices there was neither great talents, political knowledge, nor official experience. The marquis himself was a very upright and disinterested man, and his colleagues possessed fair and respectable characters; but they do not appear to have acted from their own judgment: they wished to please all parties, a sentiment indicating more of an amiable disposition than of profound wisdom, and leading to indecisive and consequently ineffectual measures. Of this kind was their principal policy, that ascertained the character of their administration—the law which declared the British right of taxing America, and the repeal of the stamp act.† Their less important measures were popular rather than able.

* In his *Thoughts on the Discontents*.

† The reader will, I hope, pardon me for repeating what I had formerly writ-

[Affairs of India. Transactions in Bengal.]

They certainly were very moderate in the bestowal of lucrative appointments on themselves or their friends; but, on the other hand, their claims on public gratitude were not great. Perhaps, indeed, it will be difficult to find, in the history of ministers, a set of men more respectable for private characters, or more inefficient as public servants, than the marquis of Rockingham's administration.

Before we proceed with British affairs, it is necessary to take a view of India. On the coasts of Coromandel and Malabar, we have brought the narrative of those India transactions in which France was concerned, to the close of the war. Those of Bengal, to which her power and influence in the last years of hostilities very little extended, we have not pursued to so late a period, but left them at the perfect establishment of the company's power. Meer Jaffier Ally Cawn, the viceroy of these provinces, elevated by the English, and dependent on them, found himself by his elevation surrounded by difficulties and dangers. The relations of his deposed predecessor regarded with resentment the man whom they deemed the murderer of their kinsman, and the usurper of his power. The sums stipulated to indemnify the English had exhausted his treasury; and the commercial privileges granted to them, diminished the revenue by which he might have repaired his finances. To relieve his necessities, he betook himself to unwarrantable and tyrannical methods of levying money, and thus lost the affections of his subjects. From the indignance and dissatisfaction of his people, he was unable to procure or extort the supplies that he required; his troops were ill paid and useless; and his principal lords not only resisted his arbitrary exactions, but refused the just and accustomed tribute. Thus distressed, he tried to relieve himself by infringing on the privileges and exemptions granted to the servants of the India Company, and thereby alienated the affections of those who alone were able to defend him against his enemies. In the year 1758, the mogul or emperor of Hindostan had been deposed by a conspiracy, headed by the vizier, and assisted by the Mahrattas, and not long after his deposition, he died in prison. His eldest son, Shah Zadda, endeavoured to assert his right to the throne of Hindostan, and was seconded by Mr. Law, a French

ten on this subject, as it illustrates the grounds on which I formed a judgment of the marquis of Rockingham's ministry.—“An attempt to satisfy two parties of totally contrary views, by not deciding the point at issue, is rarely either the offspring of wisdom, or the parent of success. Such temporizing indecision generally dissatisfies both parties, and keeps the differences alive. The stamp act had been opposed in America, not as inexpedient, but as unjust. They had not pretended they could not pay the impost, but that the imposers had no right to tax. Either the stamp act was a grievance, or was not: if a grievance, the redress did not apply to the subject of complaint: if not a grievance, why offer redress? If the objections of the colonies were groundless, it would have been just in parliament to disregard them; and wise or unwise, according to the value of the object, means of coercion, and probable result. If the right was ascertained, and we thought coercion prudent, the repeal would be absurd; if not, the declaration of right would be a mere impotent bravado. If the complaints of America were well grounded, then it would have been just and wise to renounce the exercise of an unjust power. Here was the maintenance of an obnoxious speculative principle, with the abandonment of practical benefit, for which only it could deserve support. The declaratory law tended to counteract, in America, the effects of the repeal. The measures of the Rockingham administration were esteemed the result of good intentions, but of feeble and short sighted policy.” *Life of Burke*, 1st edition, p. 76.

[New revolution in Bengal.]

gentleman, who, with about two hundred of his countrymen, after the conquest of the French settlements in Bengal by the English, had retired among the natives. Shah Zadda marched toward the frontiers of Bengal. Ramnoraïn, the nabob, or governor of Patna, within Jaffier's viceroyalty, had refused to acknowledge his authority, until the approach of colonel Clive and the English army intimidated him to submission. When Shah Zadda reached the vicinity of Patna, Ramnoraïn thought the present a good opportunity to render himself independent of the viceroy of Bengal, and declared for the prince of Hindostan. Jaffier was again obliged to apply to the English council. Colonel Clive marched towards Patna; Ramnoraïn proposed to return to his allegiance; and Shah Zadda retired, sending at the same time a letter to colonel Clive, representing his distressed situation, and declaring that he did not mean to disturb Jaffier's government, but wished to collect a force against the usurper of his father's throne. Colonel Clive, finding on inquiry that it would be impolitic to interfere in his behalf, sent him a very polite answer, declining, in the company's name, to take any share in the dispute concerning the succession. Soon after, on the 14th of January, 1760, colonel Clive resigned the command to colonel Caillaud, and returned to Europe.

Shah Zadda, despairing of assistance from the English, took the advantage of the interval between the departure of colonel Clive and the arrival of his successor. Attacking and defeating Ramnoraïn, he besieged Patna; but colonel Caillaud, with the European troops, having come to its relief, he raised the siege. The prince, now by the death of his father declared emperor of Hindostan, by the name of Shah Allum, was assailed by the British and Bengal troops, and entirely defeated.

In the summer of 1760, Mr. Vansittart arrived at Calcutta as governor-general, and successor to colonel Clive, when a new scheme of politics was adopted. It was the opinion of the council, that the war in support of Meer Jaffier was extremely imprudent; that he was unworthy of the protection of the English; that he was altogether destitute of gratitude for the favours which he had received; that he and his son were endeavouring to dissolve the connexion; that the young mogul's affairs wore a favourable aspect in his own country; that it would be wise in the company to enter into a treaty with the hereditary prince; and that if established on the throne of Delhi, he might be a most beneficial ally. To this alliance, the enmity between Shah Allum and Jaffier was a great, but, to the ingenuity of the council, not an insuperable obstacle. It appeared to the governor-general and council of Calcutta, that Jaffier was totally unfit for the viceroyalty; and therefore it was expedient that he should have a protector, invested with full powers to guide him to the best and most salutary counsels. The fittest person for this office was conceived to be Cossim Ally Khan, son-in-law to the viceroy;* to arrange and execute the proposed change, therefore, governor Vansittart and colonel Caillaud marched to Moorshedabad, surrounded his palace, and demanded that he should dismiss evil counsellors, and instantly place his government in the hands of his son-in-law; threatening, in case of refusal, to storm the palace. Jaffier, knowing that he was incapable of resistance

* His own son had been killed by a flash of lightning.

[Cossim Ally Khan. Preparations for war.]

against such force, yielded to their request, and beseeched them to grant him an asylum in Calcutta; to which they assented, on condition that he would entirely abdicate the viceroyalty. Cossim was proclaimed subah of the three provinces, having previously stipulated, as a recompense for this great service done to the provinces, the entire resignation to the India company of a considerable part of the revenue. The new viceroy generously bestowed a present for the use of the army, amounting to five lacks of rupees, about 62,500*l.* and further added a gift of twenty lacks of rupees, about 225,000*l.* to general Vansittart, and three other members of a select committee which had concerted the plan. There were, however, members of the council, and others, who did not approve of these transactions. Jaffier's viceroyalty had been guaranteed by a treaty, of which there was no evidence to show any violation on his part, no proof that he had conspired against the English interest. Nothing conducive to the general advantage of the company could be rationally expected from such a revolution, as no successor could be more completely subject to them, from his want of personal capacity or importance: and this last reasoning was found by experience to be just.

Cossim Ally Khan was of a character very different from that of his father-in-law. Bold, subtle, enterprising, and ingenious, he conceived the design of freeing himself from dependence on the English. Not ascribing to generosity, services for which he had paid so high a price, he did not think that he owed a return of gratitude. Though determined, however, to attempt his own emancipation, he did not precipitately discover his intentions. He availed himself of their assistance, defeated Shah Allum, and drove him from the frontiers of his province. He also reduced the refractory rajahs, who had rebelled against the feeble administration of Jaffier, and compelled them to make good the payment of their tribute; repaired the exhausted finances, confirmed the discipline and fidelity of his troops, and brought his territories to peace and obedience. Having thus secured himself at home, he began to prepare for shaking off his dependence on the English. He first removed from Moorshedabad, where his conduct, from his vicinity to Calcutta, was exposed to the vigilant and jealous inspection of the company; and in 1761, pitched his residence at Mongheer, two hundred miles farther up the Ganges, which he strongly fortified. He also began to new model his army, and tried to overcome the timidity that made them stand so much in awe of British soldiers. Sensible of the superiority of European discipline, he studied it with great attention, taught it to his soldiers, and introduced the European modes and construction of fire-arms. He changed the muskets from match-locks to fire-locks; and, altering the cannon, formed, according to the English pattern, a powerful train of artillery. Aware of the mischiefs from treachery, so frequent in India, he endeavoured to conciliate the chief men of his court, and confined or cut off those whom he apprehended to be insincere. Having thus strengthened himself, he began gradually to throw off the mask. In the latter end of the year 1762, he insisted that the English private traders should be subjected to the regular payment of duties throughout his dominions. This step alarmed the factory, and Mr. Vansittart himself went up to Mongheer, to expostulate with him on the subject. The viceroy answered with great firmness, that if

[Military operations. Defeat of Cossim.]

the English were permitted to trade without paying of customs, they would in time monopolize the commerce of his country, and consequently annihilate that part of his revenue. Should this be the case, it would be much more for his interest to lay his trade entirely open, which would draw a greater number of merchants into his dominions, promote the sale of their produce and manufactures, enrich his territories, and improve his revenue. He added that it would also effectually cut off the principal subjects of dispute between him and the English, an object which he professed to have very much at heart. The governor, sensible that an open trade was in the viceroy's power, and that it would be a great loss to the private traffic of the company's servants, thought it expedient to agree to certain restrictions. The factory of Calcutta, informed of this agreement, was enraged; and it was now generally regretted that Jaffier had not been suffered to continue upon his throne. On the 17th of January, 1763, the council of Calcutta publicly disavowed the treaty concluded by the governor, not only as having been made without authority, but as being dishonourable to the English name, and pernicious to the English interest. Great disputes arose, commerce was interrupted, and applications were made to Cossim to enter into a new agreement; but confident of his strength, he peremptorily refused, and even returned a very haughty answer: both sides now prepared for war.

The English struck the first blow, by surprising Patna on the 25th of June 1763; but the conquerors, despising the enemy too much, neglected prudent precautions. In their eagerness to pillage that opulent city, they dispersed themselves on every side. The Indian governor, informed of the disorder of the enemy, and re-enforced by the country, returned to Patna, attacked the scattered English, destroyed many of them, and compelled the rest to seek refuge in the fort. Finding themselves unable to defend the place, they abandoned it, crossed the Ganges, and marched downwards toward Calcutta. On the first of July they were overtaken by the enemy in great force, and after an obstinate resistance, entirely defeated. About this time the deputies that had been sent to Mongheer, returned to the presidency, and were, with their attendants, treacherously murdered. Major Adams now took the field, with one regiment of the king's forces, a few of the company's, two troops of European cavalry, ten companies of sepoys, and twelve pieces of cannon. The English commander was anxiously desirous to bring the enemy to battle; and, by his judicious manœuvres, succeeded (July 19) in compelling them to an action at Ballasora on the Ganges, about forty miles below Moorshedabad.* Cossim's troops, elated with recent victory and improved in discipline, received the Europeans with great firmness, but were at last completely defeated. Major Adams losing no time, proceeded immediately to Moorshedabad, but found a considerable body of the enemy intrenched before the place. Their intrenchments were fifteen feet high, and defended by numerous artillery: the English commander, therefore, had recourse to stratagem. On the 23d of July, in the evening, with a small body, he made a feint of an

* The reader, who has not attended minutely to the geography of Bengal, will be pleased to observe, that this is not Ballasore, which is at the mouth of the Ganges.

[Cossim expelled from Bengal, seeks refuge in Oude.]

attack upon the part where the enemy was strongest; and the same night, while the Indians were amused on that side, he led the main body of his troops round to the weakest and least defensive part of the intrenchments. The Indians in the morning, astonished and frightened by this movement, abandoned their position, and left Moorshedabad to the English. Major Adams, without slackening his diligence, pursued the viceroy through marshes and forests, across many wide branches of the Ganges. Cossim, with great judgment, abstaining from a decisive engagement, defended his dominions post by post, and in various detachments. On the 2d of August, however, they were so strongly stationed on the banks of Nullas one of the tributary rivers of the Ganges, that they resolved to await the attack of the enemy. A very obstinate battle took place, in which at last, the English obtained the victory. The Indians again made a stand at a strong fort called Audanulla, covered in front by a considerable swamp, on one side by mountains, and on the other by the river. To this natural security, they added very strong fortifications amounting to 100 pieces of cannon, and surrounded by a deep ditch, fifty-four feet wide, and full of water, except on the side of the mountains. The only dry ground by which the English could carry on their approaches, was a small part between the swamp and the river. Having invested the place on this side for a fortnight, without much progress, major Adams tried another. Observing that the Indians, who trusted to its remoteness and natural strength, were negligent on the side of the mountain, he detached, during the night of the 4th September, major Irvine, to attack that post; and before day-break, followed with the rest of his troops. By this unexpected movement the Indians were thrown into the utmost confusion: the intrenchments were carried sword in hand, and great slaughter ensued. They abandoned the place, and made no farther stand until they came to Mongheer, the viceroy's residence. Major Adams followed them, and on the 2d of October invested the town, which, after nine days siege, surrendered at discretion. The last strong post of Cossim now was Patna, which was well fortified and defended by ten thousand troops within the city, with large bodies of horse in the neighbourhood, to annoy the besiegers. Cossim had about two hundred English prisoners, taken in the defeat at Patna, whom he cruelly murdered: but they were not long unrevenged. He had, indeed, made skilful dispositions for the defence of his city, but not sufficient to withstand English force and art, so well conducted. On the 6th November, after a siege of eight days, major Adams took the city by storm; and thus, first of Europeans, effected the entire conquest of the kingdom of Bengal. He fought, in four months, four decisive battles, forced the strongest intrenchments, took two regularly fortified places, with great quantities of arms and stores, and subdued the ablest, most skilful, cautious and resolute enemy which Britain had yet encountered in India.

Driven from his own territories, Cossim sought refuge with Sujah Dowla,* nabob of Oude in the north-west vicinity of Bengal, and hereditary vizier to the great mogul. The subah of Oude afforded an asy-

* This prince, from the similarity of names, is often confounded with Surajah Dowla, the viceroy of Bengal, who was displaced by colonel Clive.

[War between the English and Sujah Dowla.]

lum to Cossim's person, but would not admit the remains of his army. Being unwilling rashly to embroil himself with so formidable a power, he declared that he wished peace to continue between Oude and the English. Notwithstanding these professions, however, Sujah Dowla saw the advances of such neighbours with a jealous eye. A negotiation was set on foot between him and Shah Allum, for uniting to restore Cossim. Encouraged by the assistance of these powers Cossim drew together a considerable force; and meanwhile the council of Calcutta issued a proclamation for restoring Jaffier. Major Adams being now dead, was succeeded by major Hector Monro; and the new commander, with great spirit, activity, and military skill, marched against the Indian confederates in 1764. His whole army consisted of fifteen hundred Europeans, and seven thousand five hundred native troops. It was the 22d of October before he could come up with the enemy, who were posted at a place called Buxard, on the confines of Bahar and Oude. The major perceiving their situation to be very strong, deferred an attack until he had explored their force on every side, keeping himself prepared, however, lest they should anticipate his intentions. His precaution was not unnecessary: the following day the Indians advanced to his camp, and, after a contest of three hours, were completely defeated. The major attacked Chandageer, a fort about fifty miles farther up the country, and being repulsed, found it expedient to raise the siege. Dowla soon afterwards collected his scattered and defeated troops. Major Monro was at this time recalled home, and major Carnac appointed his successor; but before he arrived, sir Robert Fletcher, second in command, wishing to signalize himself, attacked and routed Dowla's army, and stormed the fort of Chandageer on the 14th of January, 1765. Sir Robert proceeded to Eliabad, a large city on the Ganges, and the enemy's capital, which he soon reduced. In this state major Carnac found affairs on his arrival in April, when he took the supreme command. Sujah Dowla was now abandoned by the mogul; who, observing the signal successes of the English, made overtures for a treaty. Dowla, a man of courage, resolution and policy, did not yield to despair; he collected his scattered troops, and also interested the Mahrattas in his favour. These tribes, inhabiting the mountains of India, more active and warlike than their neighbours on the plains, entered Oude. Terrible to the other Indians, the Mahrattas were of little efficacy when opposed to the valour and discipline of English soldiers. On the 20th of May, Carnac attacked the Indians at a place called Calpi, and gained a decisive victory. Sujah Dowla now surrendered at discretion to the English commander.

Jaffier Ally Cawn, having returned to Moorshedabad as subah of Bengal, died in the beginning of February 1765. He was a weak and cruel tyrant; and in his promotion, depression, and restoration, the mere tool of the English council. A short time before his death, he nominated his second son, Nazim III Dowla, then about eighteen years of age, his successor, in preference to Miran, the heir of his deceased eldest son. Knowing the moderate talents and character of the youth, the council supported him in the succession, previously stipulating the terms of their protection. His father had been obliged by treaty to maintain an army of twelve thousand horse, and as many foot; but, as the military establishment had not been kept up according to the terms of the

[Lord Clive returns to India. Rapacity of the English.]

agreement, the company abandoned them entirely, and took on themselves the care of defending the prince against all his enemies; as a recompense for which spontaneous protection, he was to pay seventy lacks of rupees* annually. Having made this provision for his security, they did not lose sight of his instruction and internal accommodation. The father's chief favourite had been Nunducumar, his prime minister, who held the same place in the esteem of the son. This officer, a man of considerable ability, was discovered to have strongly urged the subah to shake off his dependence on the company, and was suspected of carrying on a correspondence with Sujah Dowla. The company insisted that this minister should be dismissed, and that another person, to be appointed by them, should act in the double capacity of minister and tutor. The young prince objected strongly to these regulations, and contended earnestly for having the appointment of his own servants. This was a license, however, which the council thought it by no means fitting to grant, and he was obliged to sign the agreement according to their dictation. The contract so formed was said to be the most advantageous for the English that had ever been concluded with an Indian power. Nunducumar was summoned to Calcutta, to stand his trial for treason, and underwent an examination by a select committee; to whom he advanced such convincing arguments in favour of his innocence, that he was allowed to depart untried.

The company, informed of the wars that had broken out in India, sent over lord Clive, with powers to act as commander in chief, president, and governor of Bengal. His lordship arrived at Calcutta on the 3d of May, 1765. The business to be performed was intricate; the persons with whom he would be obliged to contend, were able, active, powerful, and habituated to the highest exertions of authority; it was therefore expedient to send a personage of the highest name in British India. Lord Clive discovered that the acceptance of presents was become extremely prevalent among the company's servants: this mode of opening business had obtained time out of mind in the east, and was found not disagreeable to its visitors from the west. A select committee was formed, with lord Clive at its head, for scrutinizing the gifts; but the investigation was by no means pleasing, either to the council, or to many of the principal officers. It was alleged on one side, that luxury, corruption, and extreme avidity for making immense fortunes in a little time, had so totally infected the company's servants, that nothing less than a general reform, and an effectual eradication of those vices, could preserve the settlements from certain and immediate destruction. Fortunes, lord Clive said, of 100,000*l.* had been obtained within two years; and individuals, very young in the service, were returning home with a million and a half. It was answered that the gentlemen in question had done the greatest services to the country; that its present happy situation was owing to their efforts; that the presents were conformable to the custom of India, and not being accepted till after the negotiation was concluded, had no influence on the terms; that the salaries allowed by the company were so small as to be no inducement to men of talents to run the risk of their lives in so remote a situation, without other advantages; and finally, that those who objected to the presents, had made their own fortunes by the same means. Regardless of these re-

* About 875,000*l.*

[They obtain the collection of the revenue. Spirit of their transactions in India.]

monstrances, and of all personal allusions, lord Clive framed regulations calculated to restrain the rapacity of the company's servants.

Having adopted this measure for the civil government of the province, he joined the army at Eliabad, to conclude the peace with Sujah Dowla. On his arrival, he found that the success of the English arms in that quarter promised nothing but future wars; that to ruin Oude, would break down the barriers between the Mahrattas and Bengal; and that therefore it was prudent to leave to Dowla considerable power. Accordingly, peace was concluded with that prince; and the nabob agreed to pay fifty lacks of rupees to the company, as an indemnification for the expenses of the war. A treaty with the mogul was also concluded on the 11th of August, 1765, by which the company were appointed perpetual collectors of the revenues for Bengal, Bahar, and Orissa: for which privilege they were to pay twenty-six lacks of rupees annually. The revenue accruing to the company by this treaty, after all deductions, amounted to 1,700,000*l.* a year; and lord Clive having established peace on such profitable terms, made several judicious regulations for securing and improving it to the greatest advantage.

Thus have we seen a mercantile company, in less than ten years, acquire by war and policy, more extensive possessions, and a richer revenue than those of several European monarchs. This was an epoch in the history of conquest. Nations of merchants had before conquered very extensive dominions, but this was a mere corporate body of private subjects. The principles on which the servants of this company of merchants proceeded, were formed in a great degree by the habits and conditions of the masters. The leading object was gain; ambition was only secondary and instrumental: power and dominion were esteemed merely as the means of profit. Where the Romans carried their arms, they sought warlike glory, victory, and the splendour of triumph, as well as the gains of plunder: they took their superstition with them: and from the conquered countries made additions to their gods, as well as to their treasury. The Spaniards, the creatures of gloomy bigotry, carried to Mexico their zeal for making converts, as well as for acquiring silver and gold. These and many other victors were actuated by various passions: but the British conquerors in India directed their pursuits to one object exclusively.—the acquisition of money. They considered, in every transaction of war, peace, or alliance, what money could be drawn from the inhabitants. In their modes of exaction from the feeble natives, they observed the systematic regularity of commercial habits: they made bargains: and for the money received, stipulated value delivered. They pillaged, not with the ferocity of soldiers, but with the cool exactness of debtor and creditor. Instead of saying to the sovereign of Hindostan, “You have a very rich territory and we must have a great part of the product,” (which might have appeared the language of robbers,) they adopted a mercantile mode: “We shall collect your revenue for you, reserving to ourselves only eighty per cent. for factorage:” this was the spirit of their agreements. Before they planned aggression, they calculated the probable proceeds, the debts that they might extinguish, and the addition, on the balance of accounts, which they might make to the sum total. They considered war with the natives, merely as a commercial adventure: by so much risk encountered, a certain quantity of blood spilt, and a certain extent of territory desolated, great sums were to be gained. In all their intercourse, however, with the natives, in the plans which they

[Unfitness of mercantile companies to exercise sovereignty.]

devised, and the efforts which they employed for the accumulation of wealth, they manifested the immense superiority of the British character with a rapidity of success, that brought an unprecedented influx of opulence to this country, and effected a considerable change in the sentiments, habits, and pursuits of Englishmen.

The sufferings of Hindostan attached no blame to the nation; they merely demonstrated, that a copartnery of trading subjects is not fit to exercise sovereignty. Even if their schemes of policy were wise and equitable, they did not possess a sufficient control over their servants to ensure the execution. To supply this deficiency was afterwards the work of legislative wisdom.

CHAP. VI.

Mr. Pitt receives unlimited powers to form an administration—differs with earl Temple concerning the appointments.—Temple refuses any office.—Duke of Grafton first lord of the treasury.—Charles Townshend, chancellor of the exchequer.—Pitt, lord privy-seal, and created earl of Chatham.—King of Denmark marries princess Matilda of England.—State of parties.—High price of provisions—order of council to prevent exportation and engrossing.—Proclamation discussed in parliament.—Lord Mansfield proposes an act of indemnity, as an acknowledgment of its illegality—resisted by ministers.—Parliament inquires into the affairs of the India company—rescinds the proposed increase of dividends—an opinion started that territorial possessions belong to the crown, alarms the company.—Mr. Townshend opposes the prime minister on a question of land tax.—Mr. Townshend's new scheme for raising a revenue from America.—Session rises.—Affairs on the continent—France—Germany—Prussia—Russia—Poland.—Suppression of the Jesuits in Spain.—Death of the duke of York—of Charles Townshend.—Earl Chatham by ill health prevented from taking an active share in public affairs.—Weakness and distraction of ministry.—Short meeting of parliament—dissolution.—Review of Irish affairs.

MR. PITT projected an administration that should include men of all parties. He proposed lord Temple to be first commissioner of the treasury; but that nobleman, being now politically connected with his brother, wished for a greater share of power to the Grenville supporters than Mr. Pitt thought expedient; and, as they could not agree on the terms of the other appointments, his lordship would not accept of the proffered office. At length the duke of Grafton, who had been secretary of state in the marquis of Rockingham's administration, was made first lord of the treasury, and general Conway, another member of the whig party, was continued secretary of state; his colleague was the earl of Shelburne, a nobleman of considerable abilities, possessing a great extent of literary and political information, a warm admirer and zealous supporter of Mr. Pitt, and an adopter of his opinion, that neither whig confederacies nor court cabals, but talents assisted by public opinion, at once participating and directing its energies, ought to govern this country; and that appointments of trust in the various departments of the state should be conferred according to the appropriate fitness of the person to be nominated. Mr. Charles Townshend, recently a member of the Grenville party, was appointed chancellor of the exchequer; lord chief justice Pratt, created lord Camden, was made chancellor; his predecessor, the earl of Northington, became president of the council; and Mr. Pitt himself took the privy-seal. He was now called to the upper house, under the title of the earl of Chatham; but his acceptance of a peerage lessened the popularity of this illustrious statesman. If the case be impartially considered, the first man of his age and country accepting high rank affords no ground for censure. On the verge of sixty, and oppressed with bodily infirmity, he had become less fit than formerly for the vehement and contentious eloquence of the house of commons. His wisdom and patriotism might operate in the upper as well as in the lower

[Marriage of the princess Matilda. Parliament.]

house; and the office which he held in administration had no connexion with one house more than with the other. There is nothing inconsistent with true greatness, in desiring to found a family; and the peerage can never receive more honourable accessions, than from those who have exerted distinguished ability in performing eminent services.

During this year, the distresses from the high price of provisions continued to increase, and excited commotions and riots. The populace, thinking that certain dealers were engrossing and using other illegal means to enhance the price of provisions, took upon themselves to regulate the markets and punish alleged delinquents, and proceeded to flagrant violence, which proved fatal to several lives. Special commissions were appointed to try the offenders, of whom the ring-leaders were capitally condemned; but most of them were afterwards reprieved and pardoned. On the 11th of September, a proclamation was issued for enforcing the law against forestallers, regraters, and engrossers of corn. By not a few it was apprehended that this denunciation would do more harm than good, as it presumed the scarcity to be artificial which actually arose from real want. As the price of wheat continued to increase, another proclamation was issued on the 26th, prohibiting the exportation of grain, and an embargo was laid on all outward-bound ships laden with corn.

The opponents of the present ministry consisted of two parties, the Grenville and the Rockingham. A coalition was attempted between the former and the ministry, but without effect. Meanwhile Charles Townsend was intriguing with the Rockingham party, and trying to effect the removal of the duke of Grafton; and, though he did not succeed, the administration was evidently discordant. Lord Chatham, on account of the bad state of his health, could not control, as formerly, the jarring elements.

This summer there happened an event which was very interesting to the royal family. The princess Matilda, posthumous daughter to the prince of Wales, and sister to his majesty, in the sixteenth year of her age, was married to her cousin, the king of Denmark. This treaty was expected to strengthen the connexion between the two countries, and in that view was deemed politically advantageous to both; and to Denmark it brought pecuniary emolument, as a portion of 100,000*l.* was bestowed on her highness. Frederick William, the king's youngest brother, was now dead, and the income which had been enjoyed by William duke of Cumberland, amounting to 45,000*l.* a year, was divided between his majesty's surviving brothers; the youngest of whom, Henry Frederick, was created duke of Cumberland.

In the course of this year, the chevalier de St. George, pretender to the crown of Britain, died in the seventy-eighth year of his age, leaving two sons, Charles, who headed the rebellion in 1745, and the second a Romish cardinal.

On the 11th of November parliament met, and the principal subject of his majesty's speech was the high price of provisions, with the measures which he had embraced, the disturbances which had arisen, and the orders that had been issued. The proclamation laying an embargo upon corn, occasioned a discussion of the prerogatives of the crown, and was represented as an assumption by the council of a power to dispense with the laws, a practice which was effectually precluded by the revolution. The measure was allowed to be expedient, and even necessary; but to

[Discussion of Indian affairs in parliament.]

prevent its establishment as a precedent, it was suggested that an act of indemnity should be passed to protect from punishment the framers and executors of an illegal order. A bill to that effect was accordingly proposed, which caused warm debates, especially in the house of peers. Lords Chatham and Camden contended, that a dispensing power in cases of state necessity was an inherent prerogative in the crown: a power to provide for the public safety in cases of emergency, must be lodged somewhere: by our constitution it was lodged in the king, only to be exerted under great necessity occurring during the recess of parliament, and to last only until parliament could be assembled. It was answered, that necessity was the principle by which all the evil practices of the Stuarts were justified. The exception of necessity had been proposed as a clause to the petition of rights; the lords had agreed to it; but, on a conference with the commons, it had been rejected. If a necessity, of which the executive government is to judge, be admitted as a reason for deviating from the established law, the laws and liberties of the people may depend on the discretion of the crown. The proposed mode of a bill of indemnity asserts the general constitutional law, while it excuses the deviation, after parliament has on inquiry discovered that the alleged necessity did exist. These arguments were chiefly supported by lord Mansfield, and were evidently more agreeable to the precision with which prerogative is defined by the British constitution, than the opposite reasonings; and lords Chatham and Camden were charged with deserting their former principles. The two patriots, indeed, appear to have been carried by the heat of debate into speculative error; but the general tenor of their respective conduct through the whole of their political history, affords the best proof that they intended no violation of British liberty.

The late immense acquisitions in India rendered that country and the company's affairs objects of the highest importance to lawgivers and statesmen; and this year, for the first time, oriental concerns occupied the chief time and attention of parliament, but not till they had undergone a contentious discussion in the East India house.

When the late acquisitions that accrued from the peace and treaties of lord Clive were known in England, it was generally expected, that, as the possessions had so much increased in value, there would be a proportionate rise in the dividends; thence India stock, in July, 1766, had risen from a hundred and eighty-eight to two hundred and thirty-one. The Dutch company had, in April, declared a dividend of twenty per cent.; and their possessions and revenues, it was contended, were far surpassed by the English. Our India company, therefore, (the proprietors asserted,) could afford a much greater dividend than six per cent. On this ground they urged the directors to declare an increase, but were answered, that though many advantages had been acquired, great debts had also been incurred: and that, both in justice and prudence, the payment of debts ought to precede the division of profits. If we make a great increase in our dividends, (said they,) we may give an ideal value to stock, which, as it cannot be supported, will, like the South Sea bubble, burst upon our heads. But not convinced by this reasoning, the proprietors charged the directors with an intention of limiting dividends, to increase their own riches. On the 24th of September, at a general quarterly court of the proprietors, it was proposed, contrary to the opinion of

[Agreement between government and the company.]

most of the directors, that the yearly dividend should be increased from six to ten per cent. Two days after, the question was put by ballot, and carried in the affirmative, 340 against 231. Government at that time sent a message to the directors, informing them, that parliament was to examine the state of Indian affairs, and directing them to have their papers ready for inspection.

On the 25th of November, a committee was appointed to inspect the state of the company's affairs, commercial and territorial. Orders were given, that every account, letter, treaty, or document of any kind, should be laid before the committee. The court of directors presented a petition, setting forth the great injury that it would be to the company, and the many ill consequences which would probably attend the publication of the private correspondence between them and their servants: and after a considerable debate, it was agreed that the private correspondence should not be printed. The statements before parliament, however, were so important, as to introduce questions much more comprehensive than any hitherto discussed by the legislature concerning British India. Having viewed and examined the management of the commercial and territorial possessions, several members, and among them lord Chatham, denied the right of the company to have territorial possessions, as such were not conveyed by their charters, and were totally foreign to the nature and object of a trading corporation. Even if it were legally just, and politically expedient, that an associated body of merchants should be sovereigns of those extensive dominions, the great expense of government in the protection of that company entitled it to the revenues, for the purpose of indemnification.

The supporters of the opposite opinion denied that the charter restricted its holders from acquiring territory; and contended, that if government had a right to the late acquisitions in India, it ought to submit its claims to a court of law. Towards the end of the session, the company proposed a convention with government concerning the disputed dominions; that an agreement should be made between government and that body, concerning the territorial acquisitions; and, after various overtures, the following terms were accepted, presented to parliament, and passed into a law on the 24th of June; being entitled, "A bill for establishing an agreement between government and the East India company." By this stipulation, the chartered corporation engaged to pay to government 400,000*l.* yearly for two years, by half-yearly payments: during which time the territory and revenues lately obtained were to continue in the hands of the present possessors; but if they were deprived of any of them by a foreign power, a proportional abatement was to be made in the annual payments; and money wrongfully paid was to be refunded. Meanwhile the company held a general court on the 6th of May, in which the half-yearly dividend from midsummer to Christmas was declared to be 6½, being one-fourth beyond that of the preceding half year. Ministry had sent a message, advising the company not to increase their dividend until their affairs were farther examined; but finding that the recommendation had not produced the desired effect, the duke of Grafton proposed a bill to prevent them from raising their dividends before the meeting of the next session of parliament. The object avowed by his grace and the supporters of the bill, was to prevent such augmentations as might raise the imaginary value of the stock far beyond

[New imposts on America. Proceedings of the New York assembly.]

its real, so as to introduce stock-jobbing speculations, which had been so fatal in a former reign; that besides, government was interested in preventing such increase of dividend as might diminish the value of the territorial revenue; to which the claims of the state, though postponed, had not been relinquished: moreover, the rapid rise in India stock would diminish the price of the other funds. The opposers of the bill contended, that the circumstances of the company fully justified the proposed addition, and that means could easily have been employed to prevent any farther rise; that a legislative interposition for controlling the dividend of a trading company, legally made by those in whom the power was by law vested, and when no abuse was alleged, was an *ex post facto* law, that infringed the rights of property; and by tending to lessen the security and freedom from the control of government, which made the British funds so much the repositories of continental money, it might affect the national credit. The rescinding bill passed into a law after a very powerful opposition, in which two of the ministers, General Conway and Mr. Townshend, joined: in the house of lords a strong protest was made by the united force of the Grenville and Rockingham parties.

In another motion the prime minister was entirely defeated. It had been uniformly the practice, at former periods of peace, to reduce the land tax from four to three shillings in the pound; but since the peace of 1763, the state of the public finances was not thought to admit of this reduction, and accordingly it had not been proposed by either of the successive administrations. This year, when the chancellor of the exchequer moved the annual bill, there was a strong opposition; and it was carried against ministry, that the tax should be no more than three shillings. Mr. Townshend was on this occasion accused of not being sincere and earnest in his professed exertions: there was evidently in his character a great degree of instability; but whether his fluctuations arose chiefly from an understanding more brilliant than solid, or from some other cause, the time during which he acted a conspicuous part on the political stage was too short to ascertain. Fertile in devising expedients, rather than wise in choosing the most beneficial ends, Mr. Townshend this session proposed a scheme for raising a revenue from America, which he conceived would be productive, without being objectionable on the same ground as the stamp act. The reader will recollect the alleged difference between external and internal taxation: hastily assuming this principle Mr. Townshend, with the ardour of inconsiderate ingenuity, deduced from it a theory, and projected a plan to which his specious and brilliant eloquence gave a great appearance of plausibility. He proposed a bill for imposing certain duties on glass, paper, paste-board, white and red lead, painter's colours, and tea, payable on the importation of these articles into the American colonies; which duties, when collected, were applied to making provision for the administration of justice, and the support of civil government, in the colonies in which it should be necessary; and the residue was to be paid into the exchequer in England. The bill was passed into a law; and, as might easily have been foreseen, was regarded by the Americans as a mere variation of mode, and not a change from the principle that had produced the stamp act: its effects, however, shall be hereafter mentioned.

The conduct of New York underwent severe animadversion in this
Vol. VII.—28

[Continental affairs. Disputes between the king and parliament of France.]

session of parliament. A new regulation had been made in the preceding session, concerning the quartering of troops in America, and the additional articles of salt, vinegar, beer, or cider, were required to be furnished by the colonists. The governor of New York communicated this change to the assembly; and the next day some forces, who happened to arrive in the city, found it necessary to apply to them for the accommodation provided by the new law, particularly specifying their requisite articles. The assembly postponed the consideration of the message, and meanwhile furnished the troops with such necessaries as they had before been accustomed to afford, but did not supply the new requisitions. After various messages and addresses, the assembly positively refused, alleging that the principle was exactly the same as of the stamp act, since it taxed them without their own consent. This refusal being represented to parliament, a bill was passed, by which the governor, council, and assembly, were prohibited from passing or assenting to any act of assembly, for any purpose whatsoever, till they had in every respect complied with all the terms of this act of parliament. Unfortunately for the nation, the earl of Chatham, from his ill state of health, could at that time rarely attend either the council or senate: had he possessed his wonted vigour, he might successfully have reprobated such temporising and trifling measures as merely tended to irritate without being efficient. If America afforded, through our manufactures and trade, a very great revenue, as could be and was proved, it was a puerile policy to hazard its productiveness, rather than let glass and paste-board be duty free, and pay for our soldiers the cost of their salt, vinegar, and small beer. There was a littleness in a considerable part of our proceedings respecting America, as inconsistent with the dignity of a powerful, as with the policy of a wise nation. This long and important session closed on the 2d of July, 1767.

While so many internal and colonial objects engaged the attention of Britain, she had no reason to apprehend any disturbance of the peace from foreign countries. The French court, soon after the peace, had been occupied in disputes with the provincial parliaments, in which bodies a spirit of resistance began to manifest itself of a different cast and character from any displayed since the time of Henry IV. The parliament of Brittany having rendered itself peculiarly disagreeable to the monarch, was dissolved, and all its decrees were annulled. The other assemblies showed a disposition to combination and remonstrance; the parliament of Rouen reminded the king of his coronation oath, and intimated, that there was a compact between him and his people; they also made decrees in favour of the parliament of Brittany. The king answered, "The oath which I have taken, is not to the nation, as you presume to say, but to God alone." The several parliaments immediately began to question the royal doctrine and theory, and evinced themselves not disinclined to dispute it in practice; but strong measures repressed their boldness, and in the year 1767 they were tolerably quiet. If Louis XV. had been so fortunate as to have had for his directors wise, upright, and intrepid advisers, he might even then have been taught to perceive a change in the public sentiment. To meet with safety the new doctrines, would have rendered moderation in the exercise of his power expedient. However imprudently the court might be employed in its proceedings with parliament, in other respects it exerted itself wisely for

[Joseph emperor of Germany. Improvements of Frederick.]

the encouragement of manufactures, commerce, naval force, and revenue. Agriculture had, by the partial system of Colbert,* been very much neglected as a subject of political economy; a new set of philosophical economists inculcated its exclusive cultivation, as the sole physical means of prosperity. Extravagant and visionary as they were in their theories, yet the novelty of them made a great impression upon the French, and was to a certain extent useful in making agriculture a much more fashionable and popular pursuit than it had formerly been. France, thus occupied with the schemes of internal improvement, appeared to have no disposition to quarrel with her neighbours; she was more closely than ever connected with Spain, which from a variety of causes was no less disposed to peace, and her alliance continued unbroken and uninterrupted with the court of Vienna.

The emperor Francis was now dead, and succeeded by his eldest son Joseph on the Imperial throne; while Leopold, his second son, filled the place of Joseph as grand duke of Tuscany. The young emperor regarded the king of Prussia with the greatest veneration; and, soon after his accession to the throne, he privately gave Frederick to understand, that he wished every subject of future dispute to be at an end, and desired to cultivate the strictest friendship with his majesty; but he intimated, that it would be necessary to conceal some of his intentions from his mother, who still retained the hereditary dominions of the house of Austria. The empress dowager found full employment in recovering from the disasters of the war.

The king of Prussia, in his political economy, displayed a genius that insured success in every thing which he chose to pursue. Aware that wealth is the result of productive industry, he was far from imagining those trades always the best which produce the greatest quantity of money. He considered chiefly the physical and moral effects of the work done, upon the workman. He thought that the labour which invigorated the body and emboldened the mind, was more productive of the real constituents of national prosperity, than labour which enervated and relaxed the operator, though the latter might be the more lucrative. "He perceived (says his philosophical biographer) that great differences obtained in populousness and prosperity, according to the various employments of agriculture and manufactures; that even in agriculture, greater exertions and purer manners might be expected from men who cultivate corn, than from those who rear the vine; and that in manufactures, the hardy workmen in wood metal supplied very different citizens, and very different soldiers, from those furnished by the mechanical operations of sedentary drudgery."† In the modern systems of political economy, the short-sightedness of avarice regards nothing but the labour effected; and whether it be effected by machines, or by men little better than machines, appears a matter of small moment. But Frederick having provided amply for the subsistence and defence of his subjects, thought that he had yet done nothing for their happiness, until he had improved their physical and moral state, procured them rational enjoyments, trained them to virtuous habits, and directed them to useful and honourable pursuits; he imitated the neighbouring nations in the institutions in which they re-

* See Smith's *Wealth of Nations*, vol. iii. p. 4.

† Gillies's *Frederick*, p. 380.

[Russia. Enlightened views of Catharine.]

spectively excelled; his plans of rural economy he formed chiefly on the model of England; and in dividing unappropriated lands, he adopted the mode of the British parliament. Peace at this time was his main object, although by his financial and military economy he was well prepared for war.

The character of the empress of Russia was now developing itself, and she became conspicuous for the force and solidity of her genius, the extent of her capacity, the greatness of her views, and the adaptation of her measures to the circumstances in which she was placed. Sovereign of an immense empire, she comprehended the state of her dominions; she saw its resources and susceptibility of improvement; and, great as its strength was, how much was wanting to make Russia what it might become. The substantial amelioration of her country and people, was the object to which she evidently directed her principal attention. She accurately studied the materials with which she had to work, discriminated the state in which she found the people, accommodated herself to their notions, won their affections and veneration, and by her conduct was as absolute in authority as in power. Dissipated as she might be in her private life, she did not suffer pleasure to interfere with the performances of her imperial duties. Wishing to promote in her country, commerce, navigation, and all the useful arts, she sought a close correspondence with the most commercial and enlightened nations; with Britain she concluded a commercial treaty,* in principle and detail very beneficial to both nations. Desirous also of introducing the elegant arts and erudition at her court, she invited thither eminent artists and scholars, and established literary institutions for the advancement of knowledge and science. Although from the time of czar Peter the Great, considerable advances had been made in the internal improvement of Russia, yet that ought to have been much more exclusively the object of her princes and government than it actually had been. Extension of territory was by no means wanting, for her dominions were enormous already. Consummate wisdom would have withheld Catharine from projects of foreign conquest; but that a bold aspiring princess with such power, should not project an increase of her territories, was rather to be wished from the highest practical exercise of political philosophy, than to be expected from sovereign ambition, possessing so fully the means of gratification. We have already seen her interference in foreign affairs in the management of Poland; but disturbances were there rising, which soon brought her farther into action, and more openly manifested her encroaching character.

In the south of Europe an event took place this year, of the greatest importance to domestic, civil, religious, and political society; the expulsion of the Jesuits from Spain, the country whose superstition had rendered it so much subject to that extraordinary order. The great, energetic, versatile, and skilfully directed ability of that singular fraternity, had extended their authority and power very widely in all Roman catholic countries. Their talents for calling forth abilities, their great skill in every species of political intrigue, and their dexterity in every kind of business, spread their influence among many others beside the gloomy votaries of depressing superstition. Their authority had long

* See this volume, p. 203.

[Expulsion of the Jesuits.]

been very great amidst the gay splendour of the French court, as well as in the sequestered retirements of Spanish cloisters. But their most uncontrollable power was in South America; where it must be admitted, by their efforts among the natives, they contributed very effectually to the civilization and industry of those tribes, though they bore a sway dangerous to any state in the heart of its dominions. The authority acquired by the Jesuits in the course of two centuries was so exorbitant, that monarchs began to regard them with a very jealous eye. They saw that they really did much incidental good, and were extremely subservient; but that they were acquiring the means of becoming imperious. As in France there was more of united genius and energy than in any other popish country, there first Romish fraternities were attacked. Louis XIV. had from parade and ostentation cherished literary efforts, though in his time they were chiefly confined to subjects of taste, sentiment, and physical research, without extending to theological and political philosophy. Once set in motion, however, genius would not limit itself to prescribed operations. The very enormous extent to which superstition had carried the influence of the church, attracted sagacious speculatists, who proposed to inquire how far the various privileges claimed, doctrines inculcated, and observances enjoined, by the clergy, were consistent with natural religion, truth, and reason; how far the lives, sentiments, and opinions of churchmen were agreeable to the dictates of virtue and common sense; and how far their system of faith and practice was conducive to the public welfare. They easily discerned, that in the doctrines, institutions, and practices of the Roman catholic church, there were parts totally incompatible with reason, morality, and enlightened policy; but in the volatile violence of Frenchmen, they carried their animadversions infinitely farther than truth admitted. Confounding religion itself with its abuses, they charged against christianity the errors and mischiefs of popish corruptions; imputing to our Saviour and his apostles, the consequences of the ignorant, superstitious and usurping institutions of popes and cardinals. Deism, and infidelity of all kinds became very fashionable in France; and in a prevailing dislike of religious establishments, it was not to be expected that the Jesuits should escape; as, beside the imputations common to other monastic orders, there were such strong objections attaching peculiarly to themselves; their principles, their activity, their enterprise, their corporate ambition, and, above all, their casuistical morality, leaving a wide field open for palliating every crime. That enmity to the Jesuitical order, which virtue justified, if not arising from a sense of the hurtful arts, and policy required, was in fact owing in a great degree to infidelity. But other causes co-operated: the order of Jansenists had become very successful, and had acquired great influence; the Jesuits were known to be extremely rich, and the public treasures were very much exhausted. Ideas were long entertained, for these various reasons, of suppressing this order; and, in October 1763, they were actually crushed in France and all the French territories. The following year they were suppressed in Portugal and all its dependencies; in Spain they had been suffered to exist some years longer; but the influence of French counsels at the court of Madrid, the example of his neighbours, jealousy of their power, and avidity for their riches, determined Charles to extinguish that order through all his dominions. Accordingly it was in January 1767 ordained, that the Jesuits

[Death of the duke of York and of Charles Townshend.]

should be expelled, and their whole property seized for the king's use. The Jesuits, notwithstanding their sagacity and extraordinary intelligence, had not the least idea that any such scheme was in agitation; and, during the months of February and March, they went on with the usual zeal and ardour in their ordinary occupations, totally unsuspecting of the impending blow that was to crush them for ever, where their power had been strongest.

On the 31st of March, about midnight, the six houses of the Jesuits in Madrid were surrounded at the same time by detachments of military, who opened the outer doors, secured the bells, and placed a sentinel before each cell. These precautions being taken, the brothers were ordered to rise; and when assembled, being informed of his majesty's commands, they assisted in packing up a few moveables necessary for their journey. Meanwhile, a sufficient number of coaches, chaises, and wagons were secured, and without loss of time, they were conveyed under a strong guard towards Carthagena. This revolution was conducted with such order and silence, that the inhabitants of Madrid knew nothing of what had taken place till they were informed of it in the morning: three days after, the expulsion and confiscation were carried into execution in every part of Spain, and in the month of July in Mexico and Peru. The confiscated estates and effects of the Jesuits in Europe and the Indies, amounted to above thirty millions sterling; and thus did a government, at one sweep, deprive a corporation of its subjects, and of an immense property, without any proof of guilt. However just the political reasons for suppressing the order might be, the rapacious seizure of their property was inconsistent with every principle of justice, and could not have taken place under any equitable system of polity. In Naples, and other catholic countries, the Jesuits were suppressed with similar circumstances of tyranny.

In the course of this year, the royal family of England received a very afflicting blow in the sudden death of the duke of York, eldest brother of the king. His highness had been travelling through France, Germany, and Italy; and at Monaco was seized with a putrid fever, which terminated fatally on the 7th of September. He belonged to the navy, and had served during the war; he was esteemed a prince of good accomplishments, amiable disposition, and affable manners, and was beloved by those who had the chief access to his confidence and intimacy. He died in the 29th year of his age, and his remains were brought home and interred in Westminster-abbey. About the same time, died a gentleman who was rising fast into the first political eminence, the honourable Charles Townshend, chancellor of the exchequer. Lord Chatham's infirmities had for some time almost entirely prevented him from taking any efficient share in administration; during his lordship's inaction, Mr. Townshend, with shining and versatile talents, was the most active member of the ministry, and was taking a lead in the management of affairs. He was a personage of very considerable abilities; prompt, brilliant, witty, and eloquent; not, indeed, very select, either in the measures which he proposed, or the arguments that he employed, but extremely happy in the art of giving the best colour to the sentiments and opinions which he happened to adopt. Although a man of genius, he appears to have been rather more fit for literary than political attainments, or much more anxious about currency of opinions than their weight; he was extremely

[Weakness of administration. Parliament.]

inconstant. When the stamp act was popular in the house, he declaimed in its favour; when it lost its popularity, he voted for the repeal; and when the repeal was afterwards a subject of complaint, he proposed a new plan for raising a revenue. He took no time to form general and comprehensive views, and had no fixed principles of policy. As an orator, he was an ornament to the house of commons; but must have entirely changed his modes and habits, before he could be a very advantageous accession to the councils of his country as a principal statesman.

Ministry was now weak and distracted; various plans of coalition and comprehension, to give it strength, were proposed; but the negotiations were unsuccessful. Several partial changes were made, in which the offices were filled by noblemen and gentlemen connected with the house of Bedford. Lord Weymouth was appointed secretary of state in the place of general Conway, who had been advanced in his professional line. A new office, of secretary of state for the colonies, was created, and bestowed on lord Hillsborough. The earl of Northampton, loaded with years, retired from his place of president of the council, and was succeeded by earl Gower. Besides these promotions of the friends of the Ressel family, Frederick lord North, eldest son of the earl of Guilford, was made chancellor of the exchequer. The venerable earl of Chatham had been consulted previous to the proposed alterations, and had declared that the state of his health rendered his interference impracticable. He, indeed, had no share in the appointments, and from this time cannot be considered as making one of the Grafton ministry, or responsible for any of its acts.—The scarcity of corn continued; and from the distresses of the poor, great riots took place in the manufacturing towns.

On the 24th of November parliament met. Nothing from abroad (his majesty said) appeared likely to disturb the public tranquillity, or to divert their attention from the internal affairs of the kingdom. The sole object specifically recommended to their notice was, the scarcity and dearth of corn. Interference in the price of provisions on the part of government, is extremely delicate and difficult; nor can the legislature easily adopt any effectual mode for that purpose, except by the encouragement of importation in times of exigency, and the promotion of agriculture to prevent their recurrence. Parliament renewed the regulations of the former year, adding to them a bill for importing wheat and flower from Africa; and an act, similar to the law of the preceding session, was passed for limiting the dividends of the East India Company.

The most important measure discussed in this session of parliament was, a law proposed by opposition for limiting the period of resuming crown grants to sixty years. This bill originated in a transaction affecting two private individuals. William III. had made a grant to the first earl of Portland, of the honour of Penrith in the county of Cumberland, with the appurtenances thereunto belonging. The forest of Inglewood, and the manor and castle of Carlisle were considered as parts of this grant, and had been accordingly enjoyed by the family by the same tenure and in the same quiet possession as the rest. These last tenements, however, were not specified in the grant; and sir James Lowther, being accurately informed of this circumstance, in summer, 1767, presented a memorial to the lords of the treasury, stating, that he had discovered that the forest of Inglewood, and the soccage of the castle of Carlisle, had

[Resumption of crown grants. Review of parliamentary proceedings.]

been long withheld from the crown without its receiving any benefit from them, and therefore prayed a lease of three lives. Having consulted the surveyor of crown lands, they granted the possessions in question, notwithstanding the representations of the duke of Portland. His grace now stopped progress in the exchequer office; the cause was tried before the barons of exchequer, and sir James Lowther was nonsuited. Upon this attempted resumption, the bill was founded. Opposition insisted, that the attempt was a revival of the obsolete and tyrannical law, *nullum tempus occurrit regi*, by which no length of time or possession can be a bar against the claims of the crown. The exercise of any right upon this maxim, it was shown, was practised only by the most arbitrary princes, and even by them with caution, as they were sensible of the general abhorrence which every act of the kind excited. It was farther said, that the present grant was founded on a most unconstitutional motive, to obtain a party and undue influence in the general election; and that the avowed opposition of interests in the same country between the parties, and the particular connexions of one of them, left no room to doubt that this was the object in view. On the other side it was observed, that the tenements in question were neither specified nor understood in the grant; that they belonged to the crown, not by resumption, (for there had been no alienation,) but by original right; and the crown was no more to blame for taking possession of its own property, than a private person. The earl of Portland and his family had been sufficiently compensated for their services; and, after seventy years possession of an estate to which they had no right, they might contentedly resign it to the true owner, when there was no demand made upon them for the past issues. Ministry after finding their arguments against limitation of resumptions not likely to be successful, changed their mode of procedure, and proposed that the bill should be postponed till the next year, and this motion was carried by a majority of twenty; but the supplies being settled, and other business finished, an end was put to the session; and, on the tenth of March, parliament was dissolved.

The first parliament of George III. exhibits no distinguishing marks of legislative wisdom. Its chief objects were, individual prosecution and colonial regulation: respecting Wilkes, and other persons involved in his publications, the majority of its members proceeded with the passion of partisans, and not the cool policy of senators; and towards America, the conduct of this body was a succession of contradictory measures, neither effectual in coercion nor concession. They irritated, conciliated, and irritated again; and left the colonies ill-affected to the country, sowing the seeds of the American war. But, though their aggregate policy was either inefficient or hurtful, yet they contained a considerable degree of individual ability. In the latter years, mature and formed eloquence was most conspicuous in the house of peers. In the house of commons, after the death of Mr. Townshend, the ablest orators had not arrived at the perfection which they were severally destined to attain. The eloquence at that time, though brilliant, animated, and impressive, did not, either in closeness and force of reasoning, comprehensiveness of views, or political philosophy, equal the efforts of more recent periods.

Having brought the first British parliament of his majesty to a conclusion, we must now turn our attention to the affairs of Ireland, which,

[Original state of Ireland. Impolitic conduct of England.]

from the commencement of the reign, were of more than usual importance, and since that time had become extremely interesting. To comprehend the passing transactions of the sister kingdom, it is necessary to take a short retrospective survey of causes and events, which powerfully affected the state of the country and the character of the people.

The Irish were originally sunk in barbarism, far beneath any other inhabitants of middle Europe, even in their most uncivilized ages.* Never conquered, nor even invaded, by the Romans, they continued still in the most savage state; and were distinguished by those vices, to which human nature is always subject, when it is neither tamed by education nor restrained by laws. The small principalities into which they were divided, exercised perpetual rapine and violence against each other; the uncertain succession of their princes was a continual source of domestic convulsions; the usual title of each petty sovereign was the murder of his predecessor; courage and force, though exercised in the commission of crimes, were more honoured than any pacific virtues. The most simple arts of life, tillage, and agriculture, were almost wholly unknown. They had felt the invasion of the Danes, and the other northern tribes; but these inroads, which had spread barbarism into the rest of Europe, tended rather to improve the Irish; and the only towns which were to be found in the island, had been planted along the coast by the freebooters of Norway and Denmark. The other inhabitants exercised pasturage in the open country; sought protection from any danger in their forests and morasses; and being divided by the fiercest animosities against each other, were still more intent on the means of mutual injury, than on the expedients of common, or even private interest. So situated and disposed, when they were conquered by Henry II., the Irish did not improve from their connexion with a less barbarous nation.

Although no country had been blessed with a greater proportion of able sovereigns than England, from the time of Henry II. to the reign of Henry VII., yet no policy could be more absurd and prejudicial, than the system which had been uniformly pursued respecting Ireland. The conquerors not only took no pains to communicate to the conquered their own progressive civilization, but even prevented those advances which the latter might have themselves made. While from the close of the eleventh century, other countries were emerging from that profound ignorance in which Europe was then sunk; that unfortunate island, possessing every natural means of improvement, a climate temperate and salutary, a fertile soil, a maritime situation, numberless harbours, a people sprightly, ready in apprehension, having a fire of ingenuity that beamed through the thick fogs of their ignorance, with every physical, moral, and intellectual capability of improvement, they, from political debasement, were in a condition of stationary savageness. Such men, strangers to arts and industry, were naturally prone to disorder and insurrection. To quell revolt, and prevent its recurrence, Henry VII. proposed the extension of English jurisprudence to the appendent island. Poyning, lord deputy to the king, procured the enactment of that memorable statute, which bears his name, by which all the former laws

* See Strabo, who describes the Irish as infinitely more savage than the Gauls, Germans, or Britons.

[Improvement of Ireland under James I.]

should be of force in Ireland, and that no bill could be introduced into the Irish parliament, unless it had previously received the sanction of the council of England. The purpose of this ordinance was evidently much more to ensure dominion than to impart civilization; and though the communication of English laws might ultimately tend to infuse a portion of English arts, manners, and industry, yet its direct and immediate tendency was to trench upon Irish independence; and they long continued discontented and turbulent. After the reformation was established in England, theological difference inflamed the discontents. If men so uncultivated possessed any vestiges of christianity, being totally unfit for the genuine wisdom and goodness of that divine system, they must have received it with the grossest corruptions which it had acquired from interested imposture, oscitant negligence, or torpid stupidity. "Superstition (says one of the glories of that country, after Irish genius had begun to show its strength and brilliancy*) is the only religion of ignorant minds." Devoted to the most abject popery, the Irish, during the reign of Elizabeth, were easily the dupes of all the artifices of the Romish combination: discontent, bursting out in partial insurrection, spread to general rebellion. The vigour and prudence of Mountjoy crushed revolt; but a more difficult task still remained, to civilize the inhabitants, to reconcile them to laws and industry, and to render their subjection durable and useful to the crown of England. King James proceeded in this work by a steady, regular, and well concerted plan, and made greater advances towards the reformation of that kingdom, than had been achieved during the four hundred and forty years which had elapsed since the conquest. The act of Poynings had given authority to English laws, and rendered future statutes of Ireland dependent on the English government, but had not abolished the Irish customs, which supplied the place of laws, and were calculated to keep the people in perpetual barbarism and disorder. Of these usages, the most noted respecting penal proceedings was the *brehon*, by which every crime, even murder itself, was punished, not with death, but by a fine or pecuniary mulct, which was levied upon the criminal. In the distribution of property, the customs of *gavelkind* and *tanistry* were no less inimical to the purposes of civilized society: the land, by the custom of *gavelkind*, was divided among all the males of the sept or family, both bastard and legitimate; and, after partition made, if any of the sept died, his portion was not shared out among his sons; but the chieftain, at his discretion, made a new partition of all the lands belonging to that sept, and gave every one his share. As no man, by reason of this custom, enjoyed the fixed property of any land; to build, to plant, to enclose, to cultivate, to improve, would have been so much lost labour.† The *tanists*, or chieftains, though drawn from the principal families, were not hereditary, but were established by election, or, more properly speaking, by force and violence. Their authority was almost absolute; and notwithstanding that certain lands were assigned to the office, its chief profits resulted from exactions, dues, and assessments, for which there was no fixed law, and which were levied at pleasure. These customs James abolished, and in their place substituted English law, established circuits, banished oppression, administered justice, ascertained the rules of property, and severely punished crimes and dis-

* Burke.

† Hume, vol. iii.

[Dissatisfaction of the catholics.]

orders. He did not confine his improvements to the introduction of laws for securing property and punishing crimes, but promoted means of acquiring riches and preventing enormity. He first endeavoured to stimulate industry, and was peculiarly successful in the province of Ulster, which, having fallen to the crown by the attainder of rebels, was entirely at his disposal. The land was divided into moderate shares, the largest not exceeding 2,000 acres. Many natives of England and of Scotland received grants of estates, and brought from their respective countries, tenants, who were capable by skill and industry, to cultivate and improve the grounds, and also to practise other useful pursuits. The Irish were removed from the hills and fastnesses, and settled in the open country: husbandry and the arts were taught them; a fixed habitation was secured; plunder and robbery were punished; and, by these means, Ulster, from being the most wild and disorderly province of all Ireland, soon became the best cultivated and most civilized.* By these wise and prudent measures, James laid the basis of justice, security and humanity in Ireland; but various obstacles impeded the superstructure, which were principally referable to two sources, property and religion. Long established custom, however absurd, or even pernicious, is extremely difficult to be overcome, especially among barbarians, whose regard to mere usage is in the inverse proportion of their liberality and intelligence. The appropriation to individuals of lands, which, according to their ancient custom, belonged to a sept or family, was extremely disagreeable to the Irish. Besides their disapprobation of the new tenure, they were greatly dissatisfied with many of the proprietors, who, possessing the lands which had formerly belonged to communities, were regarded by the aboriginal inhabitants as aliens and interlopers, and a distinction arose between the *new settlers* and the *old Irish*, that long subsisted, and often manifested itself in very fatal effects. Most of the ancient inhabitants continued addicted to the Romish superstition. The liberal spirit of England towards diversities of theological belief, granted to the catholics of Ireland a degree of indulgence almost amounting to a toleration; but so long as the churches and the ecclesiastical revenues were kept from the priests, and they were obliged to endure the neighbourhood of profane heretics, being themselves discontented, they continually endeavoured to prevent the establishment of cordial amity between the English and Irish nations. Instigated by these spiritual directors, as well as inspired with a love of national independence, they ardently desired the expulsion of the English, and waited with impatience for an opportunity of making the attempt. When the Scotch presbyterians began their hostilities against Charles I. and his liturgy, and the English puritans menaced the mitre and the crown, the Irish leaders thought the occasion auspicious to revolt. A conspiracy was formed for overpowering the English, repossessing the lands of their forefathers, effecting a complete separation between England and Ireland, and re-establishing the catholic religion as paramount and supreme. Actuated by such powerful passions, in pursuing their objects they displayed not only impetuous ardour, but a vigour of ability, and a skilful and comprehensive concert of measures, that demonstrated them to be very far advanced, since the desultory insurrections of the former century. The native genius of the Irish, improved

* Hume, vol. iii.

[Insurrection of 1641. Policy of Cromwell and Charles II.]

even by partial and reluctant intercourse with the English, evinced the beneficial tendency of the system of James; and their very counsels and efforts to effect a separation, proved the benefits that must accrue from the connexion. To the historical reader, who can perceive and combine the mixed uniformity and variations of national character in the progressive stages of knowledge and civility, the Irish conspiracy of the seventeenth century affords subjects of reflection, which are not only important in themselves, but illustrate transactions, pursuits, and conduct in very recent periods. The plot of 1641 was remarkable for unity of design, extensive organization of plan, and secrecy of preparation from which there might have been expected to follow, firm, cool, and resolute execution; but when it ripened to insurrection, it burst forth with an impetuous fury and atrocity, liker to the blood-thirsty cruelty of savage animals, than the regulated courage of rational creatures seeking momentous objects. More and Maguire, the projectors, were able men, but their associate O'Neal, and the greater portion of their followers, were barbarians, with the violent and uncontrolled passions of rude tribes; which, in any evil direction, were the more mischievous, from the natural sagacity, ingenuity, and force of the Irish character; and which were then stimulated by the interested, bigoted, and infuriated teachers of a gloomy and ferocious superstition. The massacre that ensued, so horrid in its enormities, spread over all the provinces of Ireland, and involved the whole island in guilt. The daring vigour of Cromwell crushed the insurrection of Ireland, and employed plunder and forfeiture, the usual means of military usurpers to reward the instruments of their dominion, and to strengthen present tyranny; little regardless of the real interests and permanent prosperity of possessions which they hold on such a precarious tenure. In the confiscation were comprehended, not only the revolters against the English government, but the loyal partisans of the ill-fated monarch. A more sudden and violent change of property was THEN unknown in the annals of injustice; five millions of acres, which had been wrested from the former proprietors, were divided among the creditors of the anti-monarchical party, and the soldiers of the protector. An order was even issued, to confine all the native Irish to the province of Connaught, where they would be shut up by rivers, lakes, and mountains: and could not, it was hoped, be any longer dangerous to the English government.* A policy at once so absurd and inhuman, was a principal cause of subsequent discontents, disorders, and convulsions in Ireland, and very long counteracted the wise and beneficent purposes which the system of James had sought to obtain: the insatiate rapacity of the usurper rendered ineffectual the provident cares and counsels of the lawful king. To redress the grievances of the Irish sufferers, was a great object of the wise counsellors by whom Charles the second was directed in the earlier part of his reign; but it was found an arduous task, either to undo, or compensate, such flagrant and extensive iniquities. The revolutionary soldiers and monied speculators could not be dispossessed, because they were the most powerful and only armed part of Ireland; and, besides, it appeared expedient to favour them, in order to support the protestant and English interest in that kingdom; and because they had generally, with a seeming zeal and alacrity, joined in the king's res-

* Hume, vol. iv.

[Equitable administration of Ormond. Bigotry of James II.]

teration. Charles therefore promised by a proclamation to maintain their settlement, and at the same time to make amends to the innocent sufferers; and proposed to perform this engagement from several funds, but chiefly a quantity of land which was still unappropriated. When the various sources of recompense were accurately examined, they were found totally inadequate to the purpose of indemnification; so that either the present possessors must be disturbed, or the grievances of the ancient proprietors continue without redress: anxiety and alarm seized both the claimants and the holders; the former eager to recover the inheritance of their fathers, the latter afraid to lose, but resolute to retain their own acquisitions. The duke of Ormond, appointed lord lieutenant, was deemed the most proper person, from prudence and equity, to compromise differences, and reconcile jarring pretensions; and, after encountering various obstacles and difficulties, he at length succeeded in prevailing on the parties to accede to a modification. The Cromwellian possessors agreed to relinquish one third of their lands, which was to be distributed among the dispossessed Irish, who had either been entirely innocent of insurrection, or had adhered to the royal family. In the former case they were compelled to undertake one of the most arduous tasks that can be required in the establishment of truth—the proof of a negative: they were to be presumed guilty, unless they evinced the contrary: they were, besides, debarred from pleading innocence, if they had ever lived in the quarters of rebels. From the wide latitude of constructive guilt, and the difficulty of exculpatory demonstration, many persons free from the crime remained involved in the punishment; and as two-thirds of the lands still were held by persons whom the former proprietors regarded as usurpers, they deemed themselves the victims of injustice. These sentiments were not confined to actual sufferers, but diffused among their friends and connexions, and incorporating with the spirit of national independence and popery, overspread the ancient Irish. There were now in Ireland two great parties, in the nature of things reciprocally hostile: the present holders, attached to the English government, whose power only could secure their possessions; and the expelled descendants of the ancient owners, who were inimical to that government which they conceived to preclude the vindication of their rights. In both, interest and religion went hand in hand. The new proprietors, chiefly of English extraction, were generally protestants, and the ejected Irish, catholics. The mild and equitable administration of Ormond, however, prevented the discordant spirit from immediately bursting out in renewed insurrection. His great object was, impartially and equitably to promote the good of all classes, whether protestants or catholics, and to engender in both a disposition to conciliation. In the latter years of Charles, the expectations that were entertained from a popish successor, distinguished for ardent zeal, co-operated with the wisdom of Ormond in preventing the catholics from attempting to disturb the English government of Ireland. The furious bigotry of James overleaped every bound of true policy; and, without any preparation or precaution, eagerly endeavoured to re-establish the catholic religion in intolerant supremacy, annulled protestant charters and corporations, filled the offices of state with Romanists, and gave the supreme direction of affairs to Tyrconnel, as violent a bigot as himself. The protestants in great numbers left the kingdom, and the interests of England in the sister island were almost totally

[Treaty of Limerick. Subjection of Irish courts to English tribunals.]

destroyed, when the frantic folly of James gave way to the ability of William. The Irish catholics strenuously embraced the interest of the exiled king, and hoped that his restoration would both re-establish the Romish religion, and enable them to regain all the lands now occupied by protestants. Repossession and religion being the chief purposes of their adherence to the popish prince, they combated with their usual impetuosity, and butchered with their usual fury; but, after a bloody contest and repeated defeats, the insurgents were finally overcome by the disciplined valour of English soldiers. Having the rebels at his feet, William perceived the policy which wisdom dictates towards reduced rebels, who may be reclaimed and rendered useful subjects; and at the celebrated treaty of Limerick, granted to the Irish catholics what they considered as the great charter of their civil and religious liberties, and allowed an amnesty for the past, on their swearing allegiance for the future; allowing those who were dissatisfied with the present government, to retire into other countries. Various forfeitures having fallen to the crown before this capitulation, the king gratified the friends of the English government with a part of the confiscations, but remitted a considerable portion; and adopted conciliation, as the means which would render the two kingdoms reciprocally beneficial. Great pains were employed to spread industry and the arts; the intercourse of Ireland with England and Scotland, no longer interrupted with rebellions, being rapidly increased, taught and encouraged manufactures, and promoted husbandry. The Irish, ingenious and intelligent, readily comprehended the lessons they received; and, in some parts of the island, employed perseverance and industry, and felt the strength and resources which their country contained, if they were steadily and judiciously employed. During the reign of Anne they grew in prosperity, and appeared to be well satisfied with the English government.

In the reign of George I. a law was passed, making a very material change in the relation between Great Britain and Ireland, and rendering the sister kingdom much more dependent upon Britain, than even the statute of Poynings had proposed; and whereas that lawgiver had procured a negative and preventive control over Irish legislation, the bill of George I. gave a positive and enacting power, and also established the subjection of Irish courts of justice to the corresponding tribunals of England. This change passed without much animadversion at the time, though it was destined to be afterwards a very important subject of discussion and correction. The Irish in that reign appear to have been chiefly engaged by the interests of their new commerce, from which may be derived their violent opposition to Wood's half-pence. The growing trade of Ireland was regarded by many of the English with an unfounded jealousy, as they apprehended from its increase a competition of commercial interests; and the legislature of Britain clogged the industry of Ireland with various restrictions, which were extremely injudicious, immediately injurious to Irish, and ultimately to British, prosperity.

In the reign of George II. the incumbrances were partially removed; wool and woollen yarn were allowed to be imported both to Scotland and England; afterwards cattle and tallow, salted beef and pork, obtained the same permission. At one period there arose a contest between the government and the Irish house of commons respecting privilege and prerogative, in the application of the surplus of revenue, which

[Disorders in Ireland. Proceedings of the white boys.]

the commons conceived they had a right to appropriate without the consent of the crown. Popular orators operating on the fiery spirit of the Irish, the dispute became extremely violent: and though afterwards quieted by the skilful application of government to the leaders of most influence with the people, yet the seeds of dissatisfaction still remained, and the persons most keenly in opposition to government acquired proportionate popularity. The duke of Newcastle, agreeably to the general rule of his policy, sought to govern Ireland by a *junto*, composed of men of family or official influence. Another body of men assumed the name of patriots; they professed to make the commercial benefit and political rights of their country the great objects of their pursuits, and to reprobate every measure or practice that appeared to lessen the political or commercial benefits of Ireland; they inveighed against the powers asserted by the British government, the restrictions upon trade, and the expenses of the pension list, and co-operated with any party or individual that happened to be in opposition to administration. Conceived to be sincere in their professions of patriotism, they were revered by the populace, who received their representations as the oracles of truth, and at the death of George II. a spirit of disaffection and discord was manifest in many parts of Ireland.

George III. proposed to govern Ireland as well as Britain without any regard to party distinctions; but, in the first year of his reign, the animosities were inflamed to a very high pitch, by a dispute about a money bill. In October 1761, his majesty sent as lord-lieutenant the earl of Halifax, who was esteemed well qualified by united vigour and prudence for supporting the rights of the crown, and conciliating the affections and promoting the interests of the people. In his speeches to the legislature, and in his executorial conduct, he endeavoured to soften and banish animosities, to promote unanimity, to recommend and enforce the improvement of agriculture and manufactures, and to encourage the education of youth, and the diffusion of useful knowledge. But the very progress of husbandry produced discontents and commotions among many of the ignorant people, who had neither discernment to understand improvements, nor patience to await results. Parties of men assembled to destroy enclosures, under the pretext of restoring commons to the poor, and committed various outrages: the insurgents wearing over their clothes a white frock, thence received the name of *white boys*, that afterwards became so noted and so terrible. These banditti secured their union, and increased their numbers, by oaths of secrecy, an organized plan, and by inflicting the severest cruelties on all who refused co-operation. During the year 1763, they carried their atrocities to so alarming a height, as to call the attention of parliament; but no effectual measures were adopted for their suppression. Convened for the purpose of rescinding the muniments of property, they attacked rights and establishments of various kinds, and were peculiarly resolute in the refusal of tithes. The professed patriots, by exclaiming against the pension list and other alleged abuses, and calling loudly for reform at a season when the public ferment and the violence of the populace were so unfavourable to such discussions, tended to inflame the disorders; and the spirit of dissatisfaction, which was so industriously spread through Britain, acted also powerfully in Ireland.

In the houses of parliament, a regular and systematic opposition was

[Whig confederacy of Ireland. Bill limiting the duration of parliament.]

now formed to the measures of government. It consisted of two classes : individuals of great personal popularity ; and a combination of family connexion and political union. This band, headed by lord Shannon and the house of Ponsonby, was nearly akin, in principles and views of government, to the Rockingham party in England ; with whom its several members maintained a close intercourse, consolidated in various instances by relation and affiance. These may without impropriety be termed the whig confederacy of Ireland : and, in the successive political changes, joined and co-operated with the corresponding body in Britain. In parliament, a considerable subject of debate was the origination of money bills. Hitherto measures of finance were proposed by the privy-council of England and sent to the Irish house of commons, which had merely a power of refusal. In 1754, Mr. Perry, one of those members who claimed the merit of patriotism, proposed, that propositions of aids should spring from the commons. The mover was strenuously supported by Mr. Ponsonby and his adherents ; and though his proposition was not passed into a law, yet its principle and spirit deserve the attention of the historical reader, as manifesting a disposition to assimilate the Irish constitution to the British, and consequently lessen the dependence of Ireland.

In 1766, a more important and comprehensive scheme was tried for effecting a similarity to the polity of Britain. The parliament of Ireland at this time was subject to dissolution only by the demise of the crown, or the exercise of the kingly prerogative. Several attempts had been made, during the preceding four years, to render their duration septennial, but were rejected by the Irish legislature ; a new bill being now introduced, passed the Irish parliament, but was rejected in Britain. Soon after, lord Chatham, who had received the direction of English affairs, and his friend lord Camden, declared themselves favourable to the limited duration of the Irish parliament. Charles Townshend agreed to this opinion, and his brother viscount Townshend was appointed lord-lieutenant of Ireland. Instead of a septennial, an octennial law was recommended. The new viceroy repaired to his government in October 1767, and a bill for limiting the duration of parliament to the period of eight years, was proposed, speedily and unanimously passed, and received by the people with a joy and gratitude that demonstrated the eagerness of their desire to obtain the benefits which were possessed and secured under the British constitution.

CHAP. VII.

Prevalent discontents.—Mr. Wilkes returns from exile—offers himself candidate for London—rejected—chosen for Middlesex—prosecuted at the instance of ministers—tried before lord Mansfield—sentenced to the king's bench prison—popular invectives against the judge.—Riots in St. George's fields.—Wilkes's outlawry reversed.—King of Denmark visits Britain.—Favourite studies of his Britannic majesty.—Voyages of discovery and science.—Captain Cook.—Mr. Banks.—Affairs on the continent.—Parties in Poland.—Dissidents.—Interference of Prussia and Russia.—Conduct of Austria—of France.—Rupture between Russia and Turkey.—American colonies enraged at Mr. Townshend's new impost.—Province of Massachusetts more active in resistance.—New combination against British commodities.—Lord Hillsborough the secretary of state, his letter to the governors of their respective provinces.—Riots at Boston.—England.—Dissatisfaction and licentiousness.—Wilkes inflames the discontent.—Supported by the chief citizens of the metropolis.—Lord Chatham resigns the privy-seal.—Parties mutually adverse concur in opposition to administration.

Wise and liberal as was the policy of our king, which sought to govern by virtue and ability instead of a party confederacy, it had not hitherto attained the merited success. The royal plan had to encounter obstacles which partly arose from particular incidents and characters, but were chiefly owing to general causes.

The long supremacy of the whig combination had conferred on its members, in the public opinion, a prescriptive right to govern. When Pitt adopted the project of Bolingbroke, or more probably followed the natural course of transcendent talents, he was aware of the authority which the junto had acquired: he well knew that political changes ought to be gradual, and accommodated to the opinions and sentiments of the times. He therefore did not propose entirely to exclude the phalanx; but, without admitting their command, to enjoy their assistance. Even this partial invasion they bore with impatience and only from the overpowering force of genius did they bear it at all: Pitt's administration afforded strong proofs, that a change of political system must be gradual, and that the projected alteration would be arduous, unless pre eminent ability guided and invigorated the execution. The earl of Bute attempted a more extensive and rapid change than befits the progressive variations of human affairs: in seeking a reform agreeable to reason and justice, he failed, by precipitation and the want of superior talents. His personal unpopularity was prejudicial to any scheme which he could undertake, and his successors (long conceived to be his tools) partook of the prevalent hatred, which was farther increased by their internal and colonial measures. The administration of Rockingham courted popularity, but in its weakness and inefficiency demonstrated, that the whig phalanx was fallen in strength: still, however, it was not dissolved. Pitt tried the experiment of governing without the whig connexion; but found, that either the attempt was premature, or that the execution required more vigorous exertion than the infirm state of his health permitted him to employ. Feeble as a ministry, the combination of whigs was

VOL. VII.—30

[Mr. Wilkes returns from exile.]

a powerful body of opposition; and others, not of their *señt*, united with them in thwarting the measures of government. The earl of Chatham ceased to be an active member of his majesty's councils; and instead of the union of talents that the sovereign sought and the statesman proposed, there was in the cabinet a weakness and distraction, which excited the censure of the patriotic, and encouraged the hopes of the ambitious. The notion of a secret cabal continued to prevail, and had its share in giving spirit and strength to anti-ministerial efforts. From these causes, and not from any disloyal acrimony, seems to have arisen the opposition to government, which forms so very prominent a feature in the early history of our sovereign. Besides, the immense augmentation of trade and opulence in the preceding reign, had raised the monied capitalists to a much greater degree of importance, than at any former period they had attained. Always connected with the whigs, the mercantile body entered into their present views, and imputed to evil and unconstitutional motives, the interference of the monarch with their political monopoly. They were farther dissatisfied with the measures adopted towards America, which had eventually proved so detrimental to trade. The citizens of London exchanged their former zeal in favour of the house of Brunswick, for violent enmity to the successive servants whom their king chose to employ, and were foremost in supporting every turbulent individual who attacked administration. Such was the spirit now raised into a strong fermentation by the general election.

To prevalent discontents, an individual case proved a very formidable addition. Mr. John Wilkes had applied to the Rockingham party when in administration, for patronage and redress; but the terms which he proposed, a general pardon, 5000*l.* in cash, and a pension on the Irish establishment, were totally inadmissible; and his confident presumption was not only disappointed in its extravagant expectations, but prevented the amnesty which modest humility might have procured. When the duke of Grafton became prime minister, the hopes of Mr. Wilkes again revived. He had been extremely intimate with that nobleman, and expected friendship from their former social and convivial intercourse, as well as patronage from the whig principles which the minister professed. He wrote a letter to the duke, congratulating his grace and the country on his promotion, and entreating his mediation with the king. This petition, however, was entirely neglected by the duke: and Mr. Wilkes's hope of pardon vanishing, he resolved to attack his adversaries with the keenest severity. On the dissolution of parliament, coming from Paris, he proposed himself as a candidate to represent the city of London. The conduct of the court was in this case altogether irresolute and feeble; while prudence dictated determined measures either of rigour or of lenity. If they determined on severe justice by immediately enforcing his sentence of outlawry, this could have driven him back to banishment, and for ever crushed his projects either of ambition or revenge: if the more magnanimous and wiser alternative of mercy had been adopted by a full pardon, his influence and popularity would have ceased with the prosecution from which they sprung. But ministers embraced half measures, the usual offspring of imbecility, and parent of disappointment. Known to be odious to the court, Wilkes was received by the people with rapturous applause. Mr. Harley, the

[Elected to parliament for Middlesex. Riot in St. George's fields.]

lord-mayor, being in the interest of the court, prevented Wilkes from being chosen for the city; whereupon he immediately offered himself for Middlesex. Adored by the freeholders of a county which, from its adjacency to the metropolis, speedily catches its spirit; supported by the most opulent men in the city and the ablest at the bar, after a riotous and tumultuous election, the popular candidate was returned by a very great majority. Meanwhile, a legal process was carried on against him upon the former charges: he was tried, sentenced to imprisonment for two years, obliged to procure security for his good behaviour for seven years, and sentenced to pay a fine of a thousand pounds. A trifling alteration in the judicial records was magnified by popular clamour into the most flagrant and oppressive injustice. It had been a common and unchallenged practice with the judges, when requested by the prosecutor, to amend informations, in order to add to their clearness and precision. At the instance of the treasury solicitor, lord Mansfield had suffered the word *purport*, in the information against Mr. Wilkes, to be erased, and the word *tenor* to be substituted. This change, perfectly consistent with law and usage, and which could not have the smallest weight in criminating the defendant, was represented as an iniquitous measure, flowing from the arbitrary principles and designs which were imputed to the chief justice as a Scotchman, and a friend of lord Bute. Extremely enraged at the judgment passed upon their favourite, the populace forcibly rescued him from the officers who were conducting him to prison, and carried him triumphantly through the streets; but Mr. Wilkes, that he might not appear a party in this violence, as soon as the mob was dispersed, prudently surrendered himself to the marshal of the king's bench.

The new parliament met on the 10th of May, and was opened by the lord-chancellor; who, in a speech, informed the house, that his majesty had not called them together at that unusual season of the year for the purpose of general business, but merely to despatch certain parliamentary proceedings necessary for the welfare of his subjects, especially the renewal of the acts against the exportation of corn, which were then on the eve of expiring.

On the day on which the parliament met, great numbers of persons assembled in St. George's fields, expecting to see Mr. Wilkes go from prison to the house of commons. The mob becoming very outrageous, the Surry magistrates, when unable to preserve the public peace, were obliged to read the riot act, and call in the military to assist the civil power. Instead of separating, the populace insulted and attacked the soldiers: the legal time for dispersion being elapsed, force was found absolutely necessary; the soldiers were ordered to fire; and, as in a mob it is impossible to distinguish active outrage from idle curiosity, a man who had not been riotous was unfortunately killed: this was Allen, who, though humble and obscure in life, was from his death consecrated to perpetual remembrance by the pen of elegant invective, poignant acrimony, and impressive misrepresentation: several others also were unavoidably killed. On the 17th of May, a proclamation was issued, by order of the council, for suppressing tumults and unlawful assemblies. Both houses of parliament

* See Junius, *passim*.

[Mr. Wilkes's outlawry reversed. King of Denmark visits England.]

thanked his majesty for this measure, and united in expressing their approbation of the magistrates who had been active in quelling the disturbances : and lord Weymouth wrote a letter by his majesty's command, to the justices for Surry, which testified the utmost satisfaction with the conduct both of the magistrates and the troops in suppressing lawless disturbances. Samuel Gillam, esq. one of the justices, was tried on a charge of having murdered William Redburn, by having ordered the soldiers to fire ; in consequence of which, Redburn had been killed. The jury seeing the absurdity and the injustice of such a prosecution, would not suffer the accused to take the trouble of entering upon his defence ; but when the prosecutor's evidence was closed, pronounced a verdict of acquittal. Donald Maclean, a soldier, was tried for the murder of Allen ; but being proved to have acted only in discharge of his duty, he was acquitted. The mob was very much displeased with this sentence ; and, as Maclean was either known, or from his name presumed to be, a Scotch Highlander, (and consequently the countryman of lord Bute,) the clamour was the more loud and outrageous. Mr. Wilkes applied to the court of king's bench for a reversal of his outlawry, as irregular and illegal ; and, after many learned arguments on both sides, the judges unanimously delivered their opinion, that the sentence was illegal, and must be reversed.

On the 13th of May the king lost his second sister, the princess, Louisa Anne, in the 20th year of her age. In the course of the summer, the king of Denmark, under the title of the prince Travendahl, visited England ; and, arriving in London, was honoured with every possible mark of respect and distinction, and entertained at court with all the princely magnificence which befitted the guest and the host. Having viewed every thing most worthy of notice in the metropolis, his Danish majesty made a tour to York ; and visiting Cambridge, was received by that learned body with all the discriminating attention of lettered politeness. He returned by Oxford, where his reception was no less pleasing to the monarch. Arriving again in London, he honoured the lord mayor with his company to dinner, and expressed high satisfaction and admiration at the hospitality of the most opulent body of the most opulent nation in the universe. Having remained two months in the kingdom of his brother-in-law, he departed for his own. Little indebted to nature for either brilliant or vigorous talents, yet by a comely countenance and figure, in the bloom of youth, and by pleasing and affable manners, added to his rank, and connexion with the British royal family, the Danish king became extremely popular during his stay in England.

Our sovereign had from his youth devoted a great portion of his attention to philosophical experiments, scientific inquiries, and the consequent arts, both curious and useful ; he had applied himself particularly to geography, astronomy, and other subjects connected with navigation ; a study peculiarly momentous to the realms over which he was destined to reign. Soon after the conclusion of the peace, the king projected a voyage of discovery to the South Sea ; and in July, 1764, the Dolphin ship of war and the Tamar frigate were equipped for this purpose, under captain Byron, with captain Mowat second in command. Arriving off Patagonia, they were astonished at the stature of the inhabitants, which rose to a gigantic height. They after-

[Voyages of discovery and science. Captain Cook.]

wards descried Falkland's islands, and finding a harbour extremely commodious, entered it, took possession both of the port and surrounding islands in the name of the king, and called the haven Port Egmont, in compliment to the nobleman who was then at the head of the admiralty. Entering the Pacific Ocean, they sailed to Batavia, whence they returned by the Cape of Good Hope, and anchored in the Downs in May, 1766; having circumnavigated the world in a year and ten months. His majesty lost no time in farther prosecuting the discovery of unexplored parts of the physical and moral world; and the *Dolphin* was immediately refitted, and sent out in August, 1766, under the command of captain Samuel Wallis, accompanied by two frigates, the prince Frederick and the *Swallow*. Wallis having entered the Pacific, took a different direction from captain Byron, (who had first sailed north and then west,) and proceeded diagonally almost in the hypotenuse of his predecessor's track. This course brought the British voyagers to an island, which presented man under a different aspect from any in which he had been hitherto seen by Europeans. This was the place now so well known under the name of Otaheite. The manners of the inhabitants exhibited a combination of savage ignorance and voluptuous effeminacy, never before seen together in the same national character. The incivilization of the North American Indians, with the mildness of Gentoos, and the licentious lewdness of Moorish masters of harams, constituted the character of the islanders whom captain Wallis now discovered. Partly by intimidation, but still more by attention, he obtained a very favourable reception. In a year and nine months, having made very important accessions to our knowledge of the habitable globe, he finished his circumnavigation. The existence of these islands being ascertained, his majesty's next desire was to explore their resources, and prosecute discovery. It had been long before calculated, that the planet Venus would pass over the sun's disk in 1769; and one of the South Sea islands within the tropic of Capricorn was reckoned the most commodious station for observing the phenomenon: so that one object of the voyage was astronomical improvement, though it comprehended several others. The command of this expedition was conferred on lieutenant James Cook, who was not only distinguished as a skillful navigator and gallant officer, but as a mathematician and astronomer. Other men of science and philosophical research were prevailed on to accompany Cook: among these were, Joseph Banks, esq. a gentleman of talents and fortune, who had from his early youth employed his abilities and wealth in improving his understanding, enlarging the boundaries of human knowledge, and increasing the resources of human wants: conversant in the various branches of literature and science, he had bestowed peculiar attention on natural history, natural philosophy, botany, mineralogy, and chemistry; and was therefore a most important coadjutor for advancing purposes of physical discovery. Dr. Solander, a Swede of great ingenuity and learning, and deeply skilled in mathematics and natural philosophy, likewise joined this expedition; and Mr. Charles Green, the colleague of Dr. Bradley the royal astronomer, conducted the astronomical part of the undertaking. Thus an expedition was projected, which tended not only to promote observation and discovery, but deduction and science; and this was the first voyage ever undertaken upon such grand-

[Affairs of the continent. Parties in Poland.]

and philosophical principles. The honour of first planning an expedition for the advancement of science, was reserved for the reign of George III.

On the continent, several disputes disturbed the general tranquillity. The changes which the different princes were making in ecclesiastical affairs were reprobated by the pope. The king of Spain having banished the Jesuits, circumscribed the power of the clergy, and especially of that detestable instrument of bigoted tyranny, the inquisition; he reformed the church and universities, and suffered the press to be no longer subject to ecclesiastics, but rendered it amenable to civil authority only; he prohibited appeals to the pope, but in extraordinary cases; or any order from the court of Rome to be put in execution, unless sanctioned by the king and council: thus, instead of the pope, the sovereign became head of the national church. The king of Naples was engaged in a similar reduction of clerical power: the dominions of the duke of Parma were subject to ecclesiastical privileges and immunities still more exorbitant than those which were allowed in other countries by the deluded votaries of superstition, that prince therefore resolved; instead of longer submitting to the authority of slavish bigotry, to follow the dictates of sound policy and reason. He accordingly prohibited any appeal to be carried to the pope, reduced the power and immunities of the church, and ordained that all benefices should be held without any dependence on a foreign priest. The pope tried his decrees, briefs, and bulls, but they had lost their efficacy. The other popish states seconded the efforts of the Bourbon princes. The king of France reclaimed the territories of Avignon and Venaissin, in the heart of France, which had been ceded to the pope in the days of superstition. The pope employed his own papal machinery to prevent the resumption, but to no purpose: the French king took possession of the territories.

France about the same time made, by a negotiation with Genoa, another acquisition. The Genoese having long tried to no purpose to reduce Corsica, concluded a treaty, by which they transferred the sovereignty of that country to the king of France; and a body of troops was embarked at Toulon for the island, which it was expected would acknowledge, without resistance, the claims of so powerful a monarch: but those expectations proved eventually groundless.

While these transactions were going on in the south and west of Europe, the north and east was far from being tranquil. Stanislaus began his reign with meritorious and judicious efforts to meliorate the internal administration and condition of Poland, and to rescue her from dependence upon foreign powers; but he had to encounter very formidable obstacles both from within and without. There were in that country two great divisions of religionists: the catholics, whose worship was established by law; and the dissidents, including Greeks, protestants, and every class of dissenters, who were not only tolerated, but had a vote in the national diet, and shared in other political privileges, by a constitution established in 1660. The catholics, however, having gradually become more powerful than before, gave way to their intolerant spirit, and oppressed and prosecuted the dissidents, whose legal privileges could not protect them from lawless power. The clergy were extremely dissatisfied with one privilege enjoyed by the dissidents; which was, an exemption from the payment of tithes.

[Interference of Russia and Prussia. Rupture between Russia and Turkey.]

Clerical avarice and ambition stimulated the stupid enthusiasm of the populace against the non-conformists, and by their ascendancy in the diet, encroached on their immunities. The dissidents applied to the two chief protestant sovereigns, and the chief Greek monarch, to interfere in their behalf. The court of London, too distant from the scene, could only mediate by its ambassador. Prussia and Russia were disposed and able to intercede much more effectually. Both Catharine and Frederick had formed most ambitious views respecting Poland; and in the application of the dissidents, a plausible pretext offered itself for their interference. Whatever might be their real sentiments concerning christianity, they were both too able politicians not to support the religious faith whose establishment they found beneficial to their dominions. Catharine, head of the Greek church, avowed herself its supporter and defender; and Frederick avowed himself the champion of the protestant doctrine. Both these sovereigns announced their intention of protecting their brethren in religious belief; and the czarina actually sent a body of troops to promote the success of her mediations. The Russian forces seized the bishop of Cracow, primate of Poland, with the bishop of Kiar, and a few others of the most active enemies of the dissidents, and sent them to Petersburg; where, without any trial, they, by the arbitrary pleasure of Catharine, were subjected to rigorous imprisonment, in a country against which they could not be rebels, because they owed it no allegiance. The kindred theology of Maria Teresa was roused in behalf of the Polish catholics. France, then governed by the duke of Choiseul, though very little under the influence of superstition, was prompted by policy to attempt the repression of Russian and Prussian influence in Poland. The empress-queen prepared a force to assist the catholics; but Frederick notified to her, that if any of her soldiers marched into that country, he would immediately invade Bohemia; and Maria Teresa, not being equal to such a contest, made no attempt to fulfil her intentions. The influence of the protestant courts, and still more the menaces of the Russian army, obtained, in the beginning of 1768, an edict, confirming all the privileges of the dissidents.

The French, though they did not themselves engage in hostilities with Catharine, exerted all their intriguing policy to blow the flames of discord. Their plan of annoying Russia divided itself into three branches: they encouraged the Poles to form a new confederacy; they caballed at Stockholm to change the government, in order to render the king, who was under their influence, absolute; and their emissaries at Constantinople endeavoured to rouse the jealousy of the grand seignior against Catharine. A fresh confederacy of catholics having been formed in summer 1768, annulled the late laws, and adopted resolutions for opposing Russia, and dethroning* Stanislaus. The Russian troops quartered in Poland defeated the army of the confederates, pursued them to the eastern frontier, and burned the Turkish town of Balta, in which the insurgents had taken shelter. Already predisposed by France to enmity with Russia, the Turks considered this act as a hostile aggression; they sent Catharine's ambassador pri-

* See Gillies's *Frederick*, p. 399.

[Discontents in America. Massachusetts.]

soner to the fortress of the Seven Towers, and in the beginning of October declared war against Russia.

In the American colonies, the act proposed by Mr. Townshend for fixing duties on certain articles of merchandise, excited very great resentment; while the obvious proofs of weak and wavering policy in the British government encouraged them to resistance. It was easy to perceive, that the principle of the new law was the same as of Mr. Grenville's stamp act, *to tax the colonies without their own consent, expressed by themselves or their representatives*. This identity of object their political writers soon painted in the most striking colours; Mr. Townshend's impost (they said) was in every respect as unconstitutional as the stamp act; the mother country seemed determined to crush the colonies; resistance was therefore a duty which the Americans owed to themselves and to posterity. These arguments coincided with the sentiments and prepossessions of the people, in exciting opposition; and the province of Massachusetts Bay was the most active in promoting resistance. The first public mark of dissatisfaction on account of this act was shown at Boston, on the 27th of October, 1767, when the inhabitants, assembling in their town-hall, agreed to form associations for encouraging manufactures among themselves, discountenancing luxuries of every kind, and discontinuing* such articles of importation from Britain as were not absolutely necessary. The other colonies adopted the same, or framed similar resolutions. In January, 1768, the provincial assembly of Massachusetts having met, immediately entered on a general and full consideration of grievances;† and prepared a petition to the king, complaining of every statute passed since the year 1763, for imposing duties on America. They instructed their agent in England to controvert the justice and prudence of these acts, on the grounds of natural equity, constitutional right, and commercial and political expediency. They also sent letters to the several ministers, to the marquis of Rockingham, the earl of Chatham, and lord Camden, which entreated the exertion of their abilities and influence in promoting the objects of the petition to his majesty. Toward the other colonies they employed the same sagacious policy, which they had successfully exerted in opposing the stamp act; they excited a spirit of confederation, and they sent a circular letter, which communicated the proceedings of the assembly, invited the other provinces to follow their example, and requested similar communications of measures necessary or useful for the common cause. The colonists of Massachusetts, indeed, exerted great depth of political ability; for, aware that considerable differences of principles and sentiments prevailed between most of the other provinces and themselves, they endeavoured to amalgamate opinion and feeling, by giving them unity of object. This was the system of means, which the New-Englanders uniformly pursued. Unfortunately, at this period, the steadiness of policy, adapted to its object, formed a striking contrast with the fluctuating measures of the British government. Sir Francis Bernard, the governor of Massachusetts, was a man, neither by conciliation fitted to dissolve their concerts, nor by vigour to counteract their schemes. He was on very bad terms with the assembly, who charged him with having mis-

* Stedman, p. 159.

† See Stedman, vol. i. p. 59.

[Lord Hillsborough's letter. Outrages at Boston.]

represented their conduct to the British government, while he reproached them with rebellious stubbornness. This reciprocation of invective, resembling the angry brawlings of private litigants, rather than discussions befiting his majesty's representative and a constitutional assembly of his subjects, widened the breach. Bernard sent to ministers a copy of the circular exhortation, which increased their displeasure against the New-Englanders. Lord Hillsborough wrote a letter to the several governors of the colonies, to be laid before the respective assemblies: he condemned the conduct of Massachusetts, as tending to promote an unwarrantable combination against the authority of parliament, and admonished the other colonies to disregard such disloyal suggestions. He instructed Bernard to require the assembly to rescind the resolution which had issued such an inflammatory paper: and, in case they should refuse, he was directed to dissolve the meeting. Not satisfied with opposing innovations, the Bostonians riotously resisted an authority acknowledged by themselves. The sloop *Liberty*, belonging to John Hancock, had arrived in Boston harbour, laden with wine; the master of the vessel having in vain attempted to bribe a custom-house officer to let him smuggle his cargo ashore, at last locked him up by force in the cabin, sent the cargo ashore, and reladed the ship before the morning. Information of this illegal and outrageous act having been given at the custom-house, the collector, seizing the sloop, committed her to the care of the *Rodney* ship of war. On perceiving this movement, a mob assembled, buffeted and pelted the collector and controller of the customs, attacked the houses and threatened the persons of the commissioners, and compelled them to take refuge in Castle William, a fortress commanding the mouth of the harbour. The governor applied to the assembly for their advice and assistance, but received neither: a town meeting, so far from discountenancing the outrage, presented a remonstrance on the seizure of the sloop. Thus both the provincial assembly and the town of Boston showed, that, though the acts of parliament of which they complained might be unconstitutional grievances, they had resolved to resist legitimate and constitutional authorities. The governor persisted in urging them to rescind the obnoxious resolution of the preceding session; but, as they would not comply, he, agreeably to his directions, dissolved the assembly. The British ministry, informed of the late outrages, ordered troops to Boston to aid the civil power. The Bostonians, informed of the destination of the soldiers, entreated the governor to convene the general assembly; but Bernard answered, that he had dissolved the assembly by command of his majesty, and could not call another without the king's orders. The Bostonians, disappointed in their expectation, formed the daring resolution of assembling a provincial convention, which body met on the 22d of September, drew up a petition to the king against the late acts of parliament; but disclaimed all pretence to authority, stated the causes of their meeting, exhorted the people to pay deference to government, and promised to aid the civil power in maintaining tranquillity. Rendered more mild in their conduct by the approach of the soldiers, they dissolved their meeting the very day on which the first division of the troops arrived at Boston; and the tumultuous spirit of the people being thus restrained, quietness was re-established. The assembly of New-York having submitted to the terms of the mu-

[Dissatisfaction in England. Resignation of lord Chatham.]

tiny act, were restored to their legislative functions: The other colonial assemblies, guided by the circular letter of Massachusetts, and regardless of the British minister's admonitions, resolved to prohibit the importation of the enumerated articles, and directed the prohibition to begin from the first of January, 1769.

In England, the dissatisfaction and licentiousness of the people continued to increase. Mr. Wilkes nourished the discontent, by publishing lord Weymouth's letter to the Surrey magistrates, and prefixing to it a seditious preface. A great part of the people charged all the disturbances in America to the folly and wickedness of ministry; but there was a faction out of parliament, that proceeded to a degree of licentiousness which was inimical to the existence of regular government, and its most active partizans received too much encouragement from many opulent citizens in the metropolis. The opposition in parliament still consisted chiefly of two parties, the adherents of Mr. Grenville, and the connexions of the marquis of Rockingham,* who, though adverse to each other, agreed in voting against ministry. The earl of Chatham, the founder of the present ministry, borne down with infirmities, and totally disapproving of the measures of his colleagues, had long withdrawn from public business, and lately resigned his office of lord privy-seal. The duke of Grafton, though first lord of the treasury, had been intended to act only a secondary and subordinate part, as in the same office the duke of Newcastle had done, during the splendid period of Mr. secretary Pitt's administration. As the health of lord Chatham rendered him unequal to the exertions of his earlier years, the duke of Grafton actually became prime minister. The talents of this nobleman did not exceed mediocrity, nor was he mature in political experience. So qualified, he was thrust by accident, rather than exalted by design, into a situation, to fill which, in the distracted state of affairs, required a minister of consummate abilities and wisdom. Lord North, while only chancellor of the exchequer, rarely exceeded his official business, or took an active share in the general concerns of administration. Lords Camden and Shelburne, both coinciding in the views and opinions of lord Chatham, had little connexion with their colleagues in office. The other secretaries of state were not distinguished for political talents; so that, on the whole, the present ministry was far from possessing that combined ability and concert, that would have qualified them to manage with effect the manifold and complicated objects which demanded the attention of the British government. Such was the state of foreign, colonial, and domestic affairs, when the season arrived for the meeting of parliament.

* Two pamphlets published this year, "The present State of the Nation," by Mr. Grenville; and "Observations on that present State," by Mr. Burke; in their principles and views, manifest the very different and opposite opinions of the Grenville and Rockingham parties.

CHAP. VIII.

Meeting of parliament—petition of Mr. Wilkes—charges against him, at the instance of ministers—expelled the house—re-chosen—declared ineligible during the present parliament—chosen a third time—election again declared void—a competitor set up—Mr. Wilkes returned by a great majority.—Mr. Luttrell declared by parliament duly elected—violent debates, and national ferment.—Revival against the Americans of trials within the realm for treasons committed beyond seas.—Debt on the civil list.—Affairs of the East India company—Hyder Ally—war in the Carnatic.—Europe—gallant resistance of Corsica against the French—at last overpowered.—America—discontent increases from the new mode of trial.—Extreme dissatisfaction in England—the chief topic the Middlesex election.—Johnson's False Alarm.—Junius—object and character of that extraordinary work.—Petitions—remonstrance of the city of London.—Meeting of parliament—lords Chatham and Camden oppose ministry—resignation of the duke of Grafton.

THE session commenced on the 8th of November; his majesty recommended from the throne* the consideration of our commercial interests, and regretted the interruption on the continent of the general tranquillity; but stated the assurances which he had received, that Britain would not be affected by the foreign disturbances. He mentioned the commotions in America, particularly submitted the affairs of that part of his dominions to the wisdom of parliament, and inculcated the necessity of internal harmony and union. To the proposed addresses, great opposition was made; ministers were charged with having excited the disorders in America, and with gross inattention to external affairs. The Bourbon compact became every day closer, and extending its influence to Austria, brought the balance of power into imminent danger. The violation of the general tranquillity in the invasion of Corsica, France would never have attempted, but from her knowing the feebleness and distractions of the British cabinet. Our commercial interests, it was added, were entirely neglected. These were the outlines of the censures against ministers, brought forward on the first day of the session, as a text for future comment and expatiation.

The first particular subject which occupied their deliberations was corn: the crop that year had been good, and measures were projected to prevent the recurrence of scarcity. A bill was prepared, not only for increasing the prohibition on the exportation of corn; but also for preventing the extraction of low wines and spirits from wheat and flour. This act was useful so far as it extended, but too trifling in its object and operation to afford any material security against the return of dearth. An evil so frequently prevailing in such a fertile country as England, manifested the expediency of restoring agriculture to its due weight in political economy, and devoting the attention of the legislature to the cultivation of land, as well as the improvement of manufactures and commerce. Other concerns, however, more urgent, though less important, occupied parliament.

* See state papers, 1768.

[*Pétition of Mr. Wilkes. Proceedings against him.*]

During this session, Wilkes engrossed a great portion of parliamentary attention. This celebrated agitator had uniformly proposed* by political bustle to acquire notoriety and wealth. He succeeded in becoming conspicuous, but had not hitherto obtained opulence: to ministers (as we have seen) he had in vain applied for pecuniary assistance; but though they refused him the required supply, they left and promoted one means of acquisition in his extensive popularity. In the generous hearts of Englishmen, distress is a never failing passport to pity and protection. If the suffering arise from real or apparent oppression, the spirit of freedom enhances the desire of benignant vindication: and especially, if the alleged persecution issue from the executive government. But as the affections of the multitude are more ardent than their judgment is discriminating, their regards are more frequently bestowed upon noisy demagogues, than wise and beneficent patriots. Whoever proposes popularity as his chief object, well knows that he must keep alive the public attention. Wilkes and his supporters were thoroughly skilled in the machinery of political notoriety, and spent a great part of the recess in holding meetings, clubs, and parties; framing resolutions, remonstrances, and pamphlets. Lest the curiosity of the people should be diminished, or the zeal of his supporters cooled, Wilkes deemed it expedient to present a petition to the house of commons. This paper recapitulated all his alleged grievances, from his first apprehension in April 1763, to his commitment in 1768: the only new matter that it contained was an assertion, that lord Mansfield had illegally and tyrannically altered the records; and that Philip Carteret Webb, esq. secretary to the treasury, had bribed the petitioner's servants with the public money, to steal the *Essay on Woman*, to be made a ground of prosecution. The former statements of the petition, being a narrative of proceedings already determined by the law of the country, the house passed over; on the two last allegations a discussion commenced on the 21st of January 1769, which lasted till the 3d of February. On the charge against lord Mansfield it was resolved, that the orders made by the lord chief justice of the king's bench, for the amendment of the informations established in the said court against Mr. Wilkes, were according to law and equity, and the practice of the court; and also, that the complaint was frivolous, groundless, and prejudicial to the administration of public justice: on the second head it was resolved, that the charge against Mr. Webb was not proved. The preface to lord Weymouth's letter, of which Mr. Wilkes acknowledged himself author and publisher, next came under consideration; it was voted to be a false, scandalous, and seditious libel, tending to the subversion of all order and legal government; and a proposition was immediately made, that Mr. Wilkes should be expelled the house. In supporting this motion, ministers and their adherents spoke and acted as parties eagerly interested in carrying a proposition, not as judges investigating the conduct of one of their peers, that they might deliver a fair and impartial sentence. The charge was accumulative and indefinite: it contained a recitation of his former offences and expulsion, and also of conduct which was then undergoing the animadversion of the courts of law, fully competent to condemnation or ac-

* This he himself declared to Mr. Gibbon before the publication of the *North Briton*. Gibbon's *Miscellaneous Works*, vol. i. p. 100, note.

[He is expelled the house—repeated re-elections.]

quittal.* Their speeches† chiefly expatiated on these subjects, and contained the irrelevant exaggerations of passion, much more than the statements and proofs of justice. The opposers of this sentence contended, that the libel on lord Weymouth, a peer of the realm, was the only specific ground of the motion: that his privileges, as a lord, were not cognizable by the commons; and that any offence against him as a British subject, belonged to the laws of the land. For the other libels, he had been already expelled, and the house had punished him for an attack upon the legislature. Should he be twice chastised for the same offence? "By the present proposition (they said) we are to blend the executive and judicial powers of the state with the legislative, and to extend our jurisdiction, that we may take upon ourselves the odium of trying and punishing in a summary manner an offence which does not affect us, but is subject to the investigation of the laws. In the exercise of this assumed power, we are to form an accumulative and complicated charge, which no other courts, nor even we, have ever admitted in other instances. We are to mingle new crimes with old, and to try a man twice for the same misdemeanour. We are to transfer the censures of a former parliament into the hands of the present, which is to make them the foundation of a new punishment. We are to assume a power of determining the rights of the people, and of their representatives, by no other rule but our own discretion or caprice."‡ Strong as these arguments may appear to an impartial reader, they were overborne by a ministerial majority, and Mr. Wilkes was expelled the house of commons. The conduct of ministry manifested that alteration of laxity and violence, which never can proceed from united wisdom and vigour. If severe punishment were expedient, why was it not employed when he returned from exile, before the reversal of his outlawry?§ Permitted then to be out of confinement, he had revived his popularity, and paved the way for its progress to a height which nothing tended more effectually to increase than further prosecution.

Well knowing the temper of his constituents, and of the nation in general, Wilkes considered his expulsion as the sure road to greater popularity and distinction, and immediately offered himself a candidate for the vacated county. The favour of his supporters rose to an enthusiasm that overspread London, the county, and their environs; and the sympathetic spirit quickly diffused itself throughout England: under the influence of such sentiments, his re-election was unanimous; and the next day he was declared by the house incapable of being re-elected during the present parliament. On the 16th of March, Mr. Wilkes was chosen a third time; and the following day his election was again declared void. The Middlesex freeholders avowing their determination to choose him again, ministers set up another candidate, colonel Lutterel. The fourth election took place on the 13th of April: for Mr. Wilkes, there were eleven hundred and forty-three lawful voters; for his opponent, two hundred and ninety-six: Mr. Wilkes was accordingly returned. The next day his name was erased from the writ by order of the house;

* See Journal of the House of Commons, February 3d, 1769.

† See parliamentary debates on the expulsion of Wilkes, February 3d, 1769.

‡ See parliamentary debates, February 3d, 1769.

§ See Junius's Letter XI. to the duke of Grafton.

[America. Revival of trials within the realm for treason beyond seas.]

and the next day after, Henry Lawes Luttrell, esq. was, after a very violent debate, declared by a majority of two hundred and twenty-one to one hundred and thirty-nine, duly elected.* The passionate resentment of rulers against an individual, so clearly manifesting their want of magnanimity and true wisdom, produced a totally different effect from that which they expected or desired: their aversion procured to its object the warmest popularity. Ten days after the last vote of the house of commons, he was chosen alderman of the city of London. Subscriptions were opened, to raise money both for the liquidation of his debts and his future subsistence. He was represented as a meritorious patriot, suffering oppression and tyranny for his virtues.

During this session, America occupied a great share of parliamentary attention; both ministry and opposition were desirous of an inquiry, but the motives of the parties were different. Ministers proposed to justify their own conduct and that of their officers, and to convince the public that all the disturbances which had happened, were owing to the refractory and rebellious spirit of the colonists; while, on the other hand, their opponents endeavoured to demonstrate, that the commotions were caused by the weakness and arbitrary proceedings of the British government. Having these different motives to inquiry, ministers and opposition desired different modes; the former proposed to confine their investigations to the late acts of the Americans; the latter, to consider not only the conduct of the colonists, but the measures of Britain for several years; to trace disorders to their sources; as only by the knowledge of these, could the evil be effectually removed. This broad plan of discussion by no means suited the designs of ministry; and it was carried by a great majority, that the investigation should be conducted on narrowed grounds. The house resolved itself into a committee, and motions were made for various papers, which would have illustrated the conduct of government and its servants; but they were uniformly overruled. Papers in great variety were indeed laid before the house; but they related to the conduct of the colonists merely, without including the measures of government. With such incomplete materials, the majority of the legislature reposed so great a confidence in ministers, as to be perfectly satisfied; and on them, undertook to deliberate.

On the 8th of February, an address to his majesty passed the house of lords, and was adopted by the commons, declaring the late proceedings of the house of representatives of Massachusetts Bay to be a denial of the authority of the supreme legislature to make laws for the colonies. It therefore asserted the acts to be illegal, unconstitutional, and derogatory to the rights of the crown and parliament of Great Britain; and reprobated the circular letters of the same assembly, as tending to inflame the other colonies, and to create unlawful combinations. It declared the town of Boston to be, in a state of disorder and disobedience to law; justified the measure of sending a military force, as necessary in such an exigency; stated the opinion of the houses to be, that nothing could so effectually preserve British authority in the tumultuous provinces, as the condign punishment of the rioters: and recommended

* This was the question on which a youth, destined to be one of the greatest orators and ablest men ever admired in any senate, first spoke in parliament: Charles James Fox had procured a seat before the legal age; and a lawgiver at twenty astonished his hearers by the force of his abilities.

[East India Company. Debt on the civil list.]

to his majesty to revive the execution of Henry VIII.'s statute, for trying within the realm of England treasons committed beyond seas. The proposed revival of this law was very strongly controverted; it was the constitutional privilege of every British subject, declared by the great charter, confirmed by various subsequent laws, and by uniformly established usage, to be tried by his peers, and in the county in which the transgression was alleged to have been committed, that, if innocent, he might easily bring forward such testimony as would insure his acquittal. The projected plan would be most iniquitous in its operation; by carrying the accused to an immense distance from his friends and business, it rendered it impossible, except for a man of great wealth, to endure the expense of bringing over exculpatory evidence, or taking other effectual steps to clear himself from the charge. The prosecution, in effect, would be condemnation; even if the defendant were acquitted, the purposes of justice would be entirely defeated. Ministers alleged, that from the atrocity to which licentiousness had risen in Massachusetts, the revival of the statute was absolutely necessary; that the legislature and the public ought to have so much confidence in government, as to be convinced that they would not harass innocent persons; that the expense, and other inconveniences, to the guilty, were only parts of their punishment, and there was no reason to question the impartiality of British juries. It was indeed improbable, that there could be any necessity for executing the act, as the display of mingled vigour and lenity would bring back the colonists to a sense of their duty. An historian wholly uninfluenced by the party notions of the times, cannot but lament the infatuation of ministers, who, when the Americans were so greatly discontented by the infringement of one constitutional right of British subjects in taxation without their consent, attacked another constitutional right equally valuable, the trial of peers. The general character of the policy of this administration towards America, was feeble anger, which provoked without intimidating its objects.

Parliament now turned its attention to the affairs of the East India company. The agreement made with that body, as well as the act for restraining the dividends, being now on the eve of expiration, the company made overtures for a new contract; and after a long negotiation, a bargain was settled on the following terms: the company was to continue to pay to the public for five years, the annual sum of four hundred thousand pounds; they were at liberty to increase their dividend to twelve and a half per cent.; but the addition was not to exceed one per cent. in any one year. Should the company in that period be obliged to reduce their dividends, a proportionate sum was to be deducted from their payment to government; and should they fall to six per cent. the payment was to be discontinued. The company was bound to export British goods, at an average, of equal value to those annually sent to India during the last five years; and should any surplus of the company's cash remain in England after the payment of specified debts, it was to be lent to government at two per cent. These stipulations were deemed advantageous to government, and reckoned a favourable specimen of the official talents of lord North, who had been extremely instrumental in fixing the conditions. A message was sent this session by the king to the house of commons, informing them, that a debt of 513,000*l.* had been incurred by the civil list, and asking their assistance for its dis-

[Hyder Ally. War in the Carnatic].

charge: the opponents of ministers proposed an inquiry into the expenditure, which was negatived, and the required sum granted; and on the 9th of May the session was concluded.

While events so interesting to England were going on in Europe and America, a war broke out against the company in India, excited and headed by an adventurer, who, with his son, proved more formidable enemies, than any native princes that Britain ever encountered in the east.

Hyder Ally, from being a common soldier, raised himself to be master of the Mysore country, in the mountains between the eastern and western coasts of the hither peninsula, and on the Malabar side acquired extensive dominions adjoining the ocean. Endowed with vigorous natural talents, he possessed great military experience, which was chiefly attained by a long service among the Europeans. He applied himself to form and discipline his own army on the model of their system, and was assisted by a number of French adventurers in training his soldiers, and teaching them the use of artillery. This bold and ambitious warrior formed a project of rendering himself master of Indostan; but, aware that in the English he would meet the most formidable opponents, he proposed to drive them from India. With this view, applying to the Nizam, viceroy of the Decan, he, partly by threats and partly by promises, induced him to join in war against the English. Informed of the new confederacy, the council of Madras immediately despatched Colonel Smith with a body of troops against the allied army. The British commander, coming up with the enemy, drew them to battle on the 26th of September, 1767, near Trincomallee. Hyder Ally demonstrated himself both a valiant soldier and an able general; but the Indians, notwithstanding their numbers, being soon broken by the impetuosity and force of the British troops, were completely defeated. Freed from the apprehension of Hyder Ally's power, the Nizam made peace with the company, and purchased their forgiveness, by ceding to them the collection of a very extensive revenue in the Balagat Carnatic. The chieftain of Mysore, finding himself unable to cope with the British on the plains, retired to the Ghauts, where, through his cavalry, he disturbed his enemies by predatory incursions. In January, 1768, a strong armament, fitted out at Bombay, attacked and took Mangalore, Hyder Ally's chief harbour. By an unaccountable oversight, they left very few troops to garrison the forts; and these were soon afterwards made prisoners by Hyder. The war against this adventurer, when carried beyond the purposes of defence, was not attended with ultimate advantage; upon the system adopted by the company, field deputies were appointed to superintend and control the commander in chief, and these interfering in his plans of operations, prevented them from being effectual. General Smith had penetrated into the Mysore country, and might have advanced to Seringapatam, but he was counteracted by the deputies, whose gains depended on the continuance of war, and not on the achievement of conquest. Trusting to the celerity of his own troops, Hyder, in the absence of the English general, hastened to the Carnatic, plundered the company's ally the nabob of Arcot, and compelled Smith to return to the defence of the Coromandel coast. Taught by experience, he avoided a general engagement with the English, but straitened their quarters, cut off their supplies, and exhausted them in unavailing pursuits and marches. Meanwhile, having strengthened his cause by alliances with Malhatta

[Europe. Gallant resistance of Corsica.]

chieftains, and increased his army, he had the boldness to advance with a large body of horse almost to the gates of Madras. Colonel Wood, with a detachment, attacked a fort called Mulwaggle on Hyder's frontiers, but was repulsed. Encouraged by this advantage, Hyder determined to hazard a battle: a contest took place on the 4th of October, more obstinate than any that had been fought between the English and Indians, and each party was repeatedly obliged to retreat; but at last, after having caused great loss to the victors, the Mysorean abandoned the field. Hyder did not again venture a battle, but continued the harassing species of war which had so much annoyed the English. He again marched towards Madras; but knowing that if he attacked it an engagement would be unavoidable, he did not make the attempt. Tired of a war which required very great expenditure without any prospect of adequate recompense, the English made overtures for peace, which their antagonist very willingly accepted; and a treaty was concluded on the 3d of April, 1768, on the general principle of restitution of conquests. Hyder was the ablest Indian foe with whom Britain had ever been engaged; and this was the first war between the company and a native power in which they acquired no advantage, and incurred all the loss of their expenses.

In Europe, the eyes of the different nations were, during this and part of the preceding year, turned chiefly to the very unequal contest that was carrying on between France and the small island of Corsica. As soon as the treaty between his christian majesty and Genoa was published, and the invasion of the island appeared certain, a general meeting of the nation was held at Corta; and, after a very animated and elegant speech by Pascal Paoli, it was determined to defend their liberties to the last extremity. On the 24th of June, 1768, the French troops landed, and found the islanders determined to resist. The brave Corsicans disputed every inch of ground against a numerous and well disciplined army, and frequently defeated them in severe skirmishes. The French commander in chief issued a proclamation, full of promises if the Corsicans submitted, and of threats if they continued to oppose the king. Paoli having laid these proposals before the assembly, they tore the papers, trampled them with the greatest marks of rage and indignation, and unanimously concurred in calling out for war. The French being now re-enforced by fresh troops from home, made considerable progress on the banks of the river Golo; but Paoli, who had been watching a body of the enemy in another quarter, hastily advanced to this district, and on the 11th of September attacked and defeated them with great slaughter. In the course of the summer, the Corsicans continued to gain signal advantages; and the result was so important, that during the remainder of the campaign, the French, though recruited from the continent, were obliged to act on the defensive. The Corsicans had been inspirited to these gallant efforts by the hope of foreign assistance, without which, they well knew, their exertions against such a power as France must be ultimately hopeless. To England principally they had looked for aid, expecting that country to be the best inclined to vindicate liberty, and oppose the ambition of France, and the most able to send them assistance in their insular situation. But the court of Versailles well knew, that they had not to dread a William Pitt in the English cabinet; that the British ministry were weak, dis-

[Discontents in America from the new mode of trial.]

tracted, unequal to internal and colonial politics, and without either the disposition or the ability to take an active and effectual part in foreign affairs. During the winter, the French leaders pressed these considerations on the Corsican chiefs; not a few of whom began to consider their resistance as desperate. These sentiments, however, did not immediately appear in their conduct. In January and February, 1769, they made several attempts on the French quarters; but were frequently repulsed. As the spring advanced, the French, taking the field, made considerable progress, though the brave islanders maintained their cause with the warmest zeal and unimpaired resolution. In the beginning of April, the count de Vaux landed with so many troops as made the French army amount to 30,000 men, and several engagements took place: in the first, the Corsicans were superior: in the second, neither party gained any decisive advantage: in the third, however, the islanders were totally defeated with dreadful slaughter; and to heighten the disaster, one of their chiefs betrayed his distressed country, and with eight hundred men joined the enemy. In May, the greater part of the island was overrun, and their chief towns were compelled to yield to the French. Their patriotic and gallant leader Paoli, however, with about five hundred men, still continued to resist. These heroes were at last surrounded by four thousand of the enemy, when he energetically asked them, if they would ingloriously surrender, or die free men with sword in hand. They unanimously embraced the latter alternative, attacked the French, and with great slaughter on both sides, the survivors of the Corsicans made their way through the enemy. Paoli having for two days, with some of his friends and attendants, eluded the search of the enemy, got on board an English ship at Porto Vecchia, and was landed at Leghorn, where he was received both by the inhabitants and others, more as a triumphant conqueror, than as an exile from a conquered country. From Leghorn he sailed to England, where he also met with the most flattering reception, and from that time resided. Corsica having become a part of the French dominions, its government was modelled according to the will of the French king, rendered totally dependent upon him, and an appendage to the most contiguous French district of Provence.

In America, the proposed change in trials for treason not only enraged the before disaffected, but even alarmed the loyal and faithful partisans of the king and mother country. To transport an accused person, before the establishment of guilt, over an immense ocean of three thousand miles; to tear from his family, friends, and country, a man, in the eye of the law innocent; to carry him away for many months from his lawful business, by which he maintained his children, and upheld his rank in society, was in effect equal to banishment, and an infliction of the most cruel penalties, before it was proved that any punishment was just. Such a measure, every person of common sagacity must see, was totally inconsistent with the principles of natural jurisprudence, and with both the letter and spirit of British criminal law. Even those who had uniformly supported the legislative supremacy of Britain, began to question an authority designed to be exercised in such oppression. In Massachusetts for a short time the projected scheme produced some effect in repressing the disorders; this, however, arose merely from awe of the soldiers; but, as they were not employed in executing any vigorous measures for restraining disorders, the fears of the colonists soon vanished. The as-

[Associations against importations from Britain.]

sembly, maintaining the proposition to be unjust, unconstitutional, and tyrannical, formed resolutions to resist its operation; they voted charges against their governor for misconduct; which, with a petition for his removal, they transmitted to England. The other colonial assemblies reprobated the revived statute with no less force of reason than the New-Englanders; and some of them with still greater severity of expression, accompanied by more violent resolutions. Bitter altercations took place between the assemblies and the governors, some of whom imitated Mr. Bernard in dissolving these meetings. Such acts, far from benefiting the parent country, diffused dissatisfaction more widely, by spreading through the people the sentiments which had prevailed in the assemblies. The enmity of the Americans to the scheme of the present year, contributed very powerfully to the promotion and extension of the associations against British commodities. Committees were appointed in all the principal towns, to inspect cargoes from Britain, and to report to the constituents if any persons had purchased prohibited articles. Whoever were found to transgress the resolutions of the associators, were publicly censured in their meetings, which moreover inserted their names in the newspapers, to render them odious to the people. By these combinations, resolutely determined to persevere in their purpose, British commerce suffered a very great diminution. It was found, on an investigation, that the exports from this country to America in 1769, fell short by seven hundred and forty-four thousand pounds of those of the year 1768. It appeared also, that the revenue from America, which had been in 1767 one hundred and ten thousand pounds, in 1768 had lessened to seventy thousand, and in 1769 was so low as thirty thousand. The association had confined the prohibition of the specified articles to those of British growth or manufacture; the natural consequence of which was, that they began to be smuggled from foreign countries, especially from France; and thus the two acts of this administration, the law of 1767 for raising a revenue from America, and the proposal in 1769 of reviving an oppressive statute of a tyrannical prince, long obsolete for its absurdity and injustice, prevented the use of British manufactures, destroyed an important branch of commerce, impaired revenue, encouraged the produce and trade of continental Europe, and enriched our commercial and political rivals: so narrow were the views of the ministers of that time, and so extensive were the consequences of their weakness, rashness, and impolicy!

During the summer, discontents arose in England to a greater height than in any preceding period of the reign. Although the conduct of administration respecting America had its share in exciting dissatisfaction, yet the chief cause was the proceedings against Mr. Wilkes, especially with regard to the Middlesex election. The nomination of Mr. Luttrell involved in it a totally different question from the expulsion of Mr. Wilkes. The expulsion, whether well or ill founded, was a question of individual conduct, of which the justice or injustice terminated in Mr. Wilkes himself, without affecting any other person; but the nomination of a man supported by a minority involved a constitutional right, and the decision might eventually affect many others. A subject which so greatly agitated and interested the public mind, naturally became a theme of literary discussion, and the ablest men were engaged on both sides. The question at issue was, whether expulsion constituted disqualification during the current parliament? The supporters of the affirmative contended,

[Dr. Johnson's "False Alarm." Letters of Junius.]

that the power of disqualifying persons from being members of its body was inherent in the house of commons, and that its exertion could be demonstrated from precedents. The force of Dr. Johnson was employed on this side of the question, in the essay which was entitled, "False Alarm;" and his chief argument was, that the power of disqualifying expelled members was necessary to the house of commons; as expulsion with re-eligibility would be a nominal, not a real punishment. He also quoted the case of sir Robert Walpole, and dwelt on the individual character of Mr. Wilkes. Political expediency, however, could not prove existing law; and individual character was irrelative to a question of privilege between constituents and the representative body. The writer who entered most fully and minutely into this question, upon the real grounds of law and precedent, was the celebrated Junius. He defied his adversaries to produce any statute applicable to the subject. The precedent on which ministers rested, was the case of Walpole; but, as Junius shows, the judgment of the house was quite different.* Mr. Wilkes was expelled, so was Mr. Walpole; Mr. Wilkes was re-elected by a majority of votes, so was Mr. Walpole. The friends of Mr. Taylor, the opposing candidate, petitioned parliament, that he, though supported by a minority, should be returned; the house determined that Mr. Taylor was not duly elected. Mr. Luttrell, supported by a minority, was declared by the house to be duly returned. Mr. Wilkes was declared incapable of being elected, because he had been expelled; Mr. Walpole was declared incapable of sitting in parliament, not because he had been expelled, but because he was deemed guilty of a breach of trust and notorious corruption in his official character of secretary at war.

The Middlesex election was one occasion which called forth the epistolary eloquence of this renowned writer; but the objects of its exertion and the range of its expatriation were far more extensive. During the supremacy of the whigs, the influence of public opinion had very rapidly increased throughout the English nation. The same spirit of inquiry that had scrutinized the actions of the Stuart princes, operated with redoubled force after the revolution had ascertained the extent and bounds of privilege and prerogative; and the consequent laws had sanctioned the use of freedom's most powerful engine, the press, tried and proved in the contentions of the whigs and tories in the reigns of William and Anne; of ministerial and anti-ministerial parties, while Walpole sat at the helm of affairs: the efficacy of this energetic instrument was more fully essayed since the accession of the present sovereign to the throne; and most successfully employed in counteracting the liberal and comprehensive policy which, without respect of parties, sought official fitness in the ministers of the crown. Misapprehending, or perverting ingenuity, charged the failure of erroneous or premature means to the impolicy of the general end; and endeavoured to demonstrate, that every censurable measure of individual ministers arose from the new system, and that the only remedy for the evils under which the country and its dependencies labour, was the renewal of the whig monopoly.† These were the propositions which the parliamentary orators of the aristocratical confederacy

* See Letter XVI. dated July 19th, 1769.

† See the scope of opposition writings, but especially Burke on the discontents, and Junius's letters.

[Middlesex election. Address to the king.]

wished to inculcate themselves, and also to disseminate through literary coadjutors. To this phalanx of opposition and discontent, several senators, and many writers, who were not partisans, adhered; in the course of the contests, the high and growing authority of the press was daily more manifest, and in the estimation of the multitude rivalled parliament itself, and the whig* combination entertained sanguine hopes, that through intrinsic force, aided by literary eloquence, that fanned the popular flame, they should at length succeed in restoring the former system, and recovering the direction of the royal councils. To regain for the whigs and their supporters the sole possession of the political fortress, fought their champion Junius. Personal motives evidently inflamed this writer against individual officers of the crown, whom party considerations induced him to assail, as members of a body which was to be driven from the councils of the king, to make way for the restoration of the whigs. He began his warfare in January 1769, by a general view of the state of the country; described Britain as internally distracted, and as little regarded by foreign powers: and assuming the truth of his account, imputed the alleged evils to the new system and the existing ministers. He thence descended to specific measures, and the respective characters of the chief members of the administration; with a two-fold purpose, of deriving the counsels from the new plan of royal policy, and its alleged framer and conductor lord Bute; and demonstrating that the chief officers of the crown were, from private profligacy, public corruption, or political prepossessions, the fittest for carrying it into execution.† The Middlesex election, at an early period of his work, afforded him an opportunity of inveighing against ministers, and attacking parliament as meanly condescending to be the tool of government in violating the rights of electors, and depriving Englishmen of their constitutional and most valuable franchise. Keeping directly to his purpose, he deduced the Middlesex election from the new system, and the ministers who had been chosen to render it effectual. To the same cause he ascribed the various acts, legislative, executive, and judicial, which he reprobated in the course of his writings. With skillful unity of design, the details and result of his eloquence were adapted to his purposes of impressing the public with an opinion that the whole policy of the present reign had been unconstitutional in principles, at once feeble and oppressive in operation, and pernicious in effect. Advanced not in the impassioned hour of contentious and temporary debate, but in a uniform series of deliberate inculcation, such assertions evidently conveyed an indirect censure of the sovereign; but circuitous attack was not sufficient for the purpose of Junius. A direct address to the king himself, he thought would more effectually accomplish the end for which he employed his pen. Composed with exquisite skill and great ability; dexterously adapted to the popular prejudices, and the views of the whigs, his letters had converged all the rays of discontent into one focus; now was the time for exciting a flame, which should consume every object that was hostile to the confederacy of the whigs. He wrote a letter, that contained a direct and virulent attack on the con-

* See letters to the duke of Grafton, &c. and to the dukes of Grafton and Bedford, and lord Mansfield.

† He accuses lords Mansfield and Bute with jacobitism. See letters, *passim*.

[Object and character of this extraordinary man.]

duct and government of the king; in which the errors imputed to the monarch's administration were his dereliction of the policy* of his two predecessors; his choice of servants without regard to the whig connexion, his employment of Scotchmen, and the series of successive measures which these changes had produced. The consequences (said Junius to his sovereign) must be dissatisfaction, rebellion, and revolution; unless the king should cease to govern according to his own judgment and choice, and should yield his understanding and will to the implicit direction of a party. Such was the object and nature of the letters of Junius, which continued to be published for near four years; and to ensure almost unprecedented circulation through the union of the prevalent violence of popular licentiousness with vigorous and masterly composition. For clearness, precision, and force of style, select phraseology, dexterous arrangement, impressiveness of manner, giving the materials the most pointed effect, these productions have rarely been exceeded, and not often equalled, by political publications; but he who shall look into Junius for a close chain of antecedents and consequents, facts, and legitimate inferences, will be disappointed, by seeking for what the author never intended to bestow, and what would not have answered his purpose. Junius could reason clearly and strongly; but he did not constantly argue conclusively, because his object was, not to enlighten the understanding, but to inflame the passions. He gratified the people by repeating to them, in strong and nervous language, their own notions and feelings: he pleased them not for the justness of performance, but by dexterously chiming their favourite tunes. His charges against the dukes of Grafton and Bedford represent those noblemen as the most profligate and abandoned men that ever had disgraced the British senate or cabinet; but what impartial estimator of political characters would form his judgment from accusations that were substantiated by no proof, and totally inconsistent with probability! The illustrious Mansfield he described as a most corrupt and unjust judge, as a mean time-serving and unprincipled courtier, and as a jacobite, inimical to the king and government which he professed to support. What weight would an impartial investigator of merit allow to such calumnious allegations, not only unsupported by any proof, but disproved by the whole tenor and course of the life and conduct of their object. Aware, that in the misapprehension of party rage, the slander of dignity and merit was one road to popularity, Junius insulted a much more exalted character, and completed his calumny by charges which were equally false and seditious. History, after taking a retrospective view of Grecian and Roman demagogues, will scarcely be able to present such an instance of invective, ingenious and inflammatory; scurrility, nervous and elegant; plausible sophistry, impressive declamation, poignant and sarcastic malice, as in the English orator of the IRON MASK. These anonymous effusions were not prized only by such critics as composed Mr. Wilkes's election mobs, but by readers of real abilities and learning, who, hostile to government, and approving the spirit which they breathed, did not rigorously scrutinize the arguments; men of taste, charmed with the beauties of the composition, overlooked the reasoning and tendency;

* Junius's letter to the king, December 19th, 1769.

[Petition. Remonstrance of the city of London. Parliament.]

and never was a political work more universally perused than the letters of Junius.

Ministers, aware of the prevailing discontents, endeavoured to procure addresses which might counteract the popular spirit, but were in England by no means successful. Essex, Kent, Surry, and Salop, were the only counties; the universities of Oxford and Cambridge, the cities of Bristol and Coventry, and the town of Liverpool, the only corporations of note that expressed the sentiments desired by government. From Scotland, however, the addresses were more numerous and agreeable to ministry.* Petitions, on the contrary, were presented from many counties, cities, and corporations, and these were of two very different classes:—one set, though explicit, was temperate; and, though forcible, decorous: of this species, the best written and most distinguished were from Buckinghamshire and Yorkshire, supposed to have been respectively framed by Mr. Burke and sir George Saville. These confined themselves to the rights of election, which they asserted to be violated; and, either indirectly or expressly, prayed for a dissolution of parliament. The other class, though nominally petitions, were false and indecent remonstrances; of these, the most noted and prominent were from Middlesex and the city of London.† They professed to review the whole series of acts during his present majesty's reign. According to their account, the king had been uniformly directed by profligate counsellors, who had infused into the royal mind sentiments and counsels of the most dangerous tendency to the liberties and happiness of his subjects; from those pernicious counsels, according to their assertion and enumeration, had proceeded the corruption of all the orders, and violation of the most sacred rights of Englishmen; and the reign of the king was a tissue of unjust, tyrannical, and cruel acts, flowing from the legislative, executive, and judicative estates: after this statement, they proceeded to pray, that he would banish from his royal favour, trust, and confidence, his evil and pernicious counsellors. Though the tenor and language of the Middlesex and London petitions were essentially the same, the latter was rendered more notorious, by the perseverance of unfounded expostulation with which its promoters obtruded their abusive charges upon their sovereign. False as many of the allegations were, yet, coming from the most opulent body in the kingdom, they had very great influence in spreading the discontents, and the dissatisfaction had risen to an extraordinary height before the meeting of the legislature.

Parliament was assembled on the 9th of January 1770; and, contrary to popular expectation, his majesty's speech did not mention the public discontents. One subject of which the king spoke, though really of very great importance, was much ridiculed by the speakers and writers‡ of opposition. An infectious distemper having broken out among the cattle, threatened one of the chief articles of provision. The king, by the advice of his privy-council, had taken every step which he thought likely to stop the contagion, and consulted his parliament on farther measures to be adopted concerning a matter of the highest national im-

* See state papers, 1769.

† See in the state papers, the petition of the Middlesex electors, May 24th, 1769, and the London petition of June 30th, 1769.

‡ See Junius's letter to the duke of Grafton, February 14th, 1770.

[Resignation of the duke of Grafton.]

portance. He expressed his regret, that his endeavours to tranquillize America had not been attended with the desired success; and that combinations had been formed to destroy the commercial connexion between our colonial provinces and this country. He had, however, received the strongest assurances, that the present disturbances in Europe would not interrupt the quiet of Great Britain. The debate upon the address contained a very wide range of animadversion, and great acrimony of censure, into which the opposition in both houses introduced the Middlesex election, the prevailing discontents in England, and the commotions in America, and urged the dissolution of parliament and a total change of counsels. Ministers, admitting that discontents existed, imputed them to the spirit of faction, and the speeches, writings, and petitions, which had been thence produced; they, however, were by no means unanimous. Lords Camden and Shelburne withdrew from counsels so different from those which they and their admired friend lord Chatham would have supported or approved. Soon after, to the great astonishment of the nation, the duke of Grafton, on the 28th of January, resigned his office of first lord of the treasury. Lord Camden and Mr. Dunning, his chief supporters in their respective houses, had shown themselves inimical to the measures which had been recently pursued: besides, the duke of Grafton professed himself the political pupil of the illustrious Chatham; and though, during the illness and inaction of that statesman, he had swerved from his principles, opinions, and maxims, he still avowed the highest veneration for his character and sentiments. Perfectly recovered, lord Chatham was now returned to parliament, and with his wonted vigour attacked the system and measures of administration. The opposition of all his ablest friends Grafton could not endure. In addition to these causes, we may find another probable reason for the dereliction of his post. Junius, indefatigable in raking together calumnious anecdotes, and dexterous in bestowing on them the appearance of truth, had made the private as well as the public conduct of this nobleman the chief butt of his satire, and for his actions assigned the most contemptible and unworthy motives. He must be either grossly stupid or stoically magnanimous, either less or greater than ordinary men, who, though conscious of innocence, can bear with indifference powerful calumny that produces general belief. The duke of Grafton, regarding his character, was so much moved by the letters of Junius, that they certainly cooperated with other causes in impelling him to resign.

CHAP. IX.

Commencement of lord North's administration.—The remonstrance of the city of London—and reply of his majesty—are discussed in parliament.—Bill to prevent officers of the revenue from voting at elections—negated.—Mr. Grenville's law for regulating contested elections.—Lord North's bill for repealing all duties on America, except on tea.—Tumult at Boston—captain Preston and the soldiers interfere—tried and acquitted.—The minister wishing conciliation, overlooks the riot.—Session rises.—War between Russia and Turkey.—Catharine is favoured by England—sends a fleet to the Mediterranean—her armies overrun Moldavia and Wallachia—alarm Prussia and Austria.—France—disputes between the king and parliaments.—Dispute between Britain and Spain about Falkland's island.—Spain, the aggressor, refuses to make adequate satisfaction—trusts to the co-operation of France—disappointed—offers concessions that satisfy the British court.—America becomes more tranquil.—Discontents still continue in England.—London addresses the king—dignified answer of his majesty—note reply of Beckford, the lord mayor.—Meeting of parliament.—Lord Mansfield's doctrines on the law of libel—are controverted by lord Camden—Camden challenges the chief justice to a legal disquisition on the subject—lord Mansfield declines the contest.—Prosecution of printers.—Misunderstanding between the two houses.—Singular confederacy for bribery in the borough of Shoreham.—Opposition censure the terms of satisfaction admitted from Spain.—Supplies.—Session rises.

LORD NORTH, chancellor of the exchequer, succeeded the duke of Grafton in his office of first lord of the treasury; and from this time commenced an administration which forms a momentous era in the history of Great Britain.

The Middlesex election came before both houses in a variety of forms, and produced brilliant and forcible eloquence, but necessarily a repetition of arguments which had been already employed. In discussing this subject, lord Chatham reviewed the measures of government, which he declared, in its principles and details, to be weak, unconstitutional, and ruinous; and unfolded his own reasons for opposing a ministry which owed its existence to himself. Finding (he said) the line of conduct which he had chalked out not observed, and his opinion totally overruled, he had withdrawn from public business, and at length entirely resigned.—His several motions, however, were negated by the influence of ministry.

The reception of the London petition underwent very severe animadversions. The king not having paid to that production the favourable attention which its authors had the presumption to expect, they chose to deliver another paper to the king, entitled, the *humble* address, *remonstrance* and petition of the lord-mayor, aldermen, and livery of the city of London. In this *humble* application to their sovereign, these citizens undertook to declare what was the law of the land, and wherein it had been violated; and to prophesy that its violation would produce more ruinous consequences than the ship-money of Charles I. and the dispensing power of James II. The citizens next declared the parliament a *non-entity*, an illegal meeting, whose acts were not binding, and therefore could require no obedience. They drew a parallel between the ad-

[Reply of the king to the remonstrance. Discussion in parliament.]

ministrations of George III. and James II; differing indeed in means, but concurring (they affirmed) in principles and system. The constitution, now endangered by the wickedness of his majesty's ministers, had been established by the virtue of their ancestors, and by the virtue of present patriots it should be preserved. The concluding paragraph of this essay I shall quote, as a specimen of the terms in which this corporation dictated to their monarch, and of the licentiousness of that period of history. "Since, therefore, the misdeeds of your majesty's ministers, in violating the freedom of election, and depraving the noble constitution of parliaments, are notorious, as well as subversive of the fundamental laws and liberties of this realm; and since your majesty, both in honour and justice, is obliged inviolably to preserve them, according to the oath made to God and your subjects at your coronation; we, your majesty's *remonstrants*, assure ourselves, that your majesty will restore the constitutional government and quiet of your people, by dissolving this parliament, and removing those evil ministers for ever from your councils." The answer was a striking example of temperate, but dignified and forcible reproof; it was couched in the following terms: "I shall always be ready to receive the requests, and to listen to the complaints of my subjects; but it gives me great concern to find, that any of them should have been so far misled, as to offer me an address and remonstrance, the contents of which I cannot but consider as disrespectful to me, injurious to my parliament, and irreconcilable to the principles of the constitution. I have made the law of the land the rule of my conduct, esteeming it my chief glory to reign over a free people. With this view, I have always been careful, as well to execute faithfully the trust reposed in me, as to avoid even the appearance of invading any of those powers which the constitution has placed in other hands. It is only by persevering in such a conduct, that I can either discharge my own duty, or secure to my subjects the free enjoyment of those rights which my family were called to defend: and while I act upon these principles, I shall have a right to expect, and I am confident I shall continue to receive, the steady and affectionate support of my people."

On the 15th of March, the remonstrance was discussed by the house. The city members, supported by the rest of the opposition, defended it: its framers gloried in the production. Others, less violent, eluded the merits of the paper in question, and reasoned on the general right of petitioning his majesty, and the propriety of addressing him at the present time. The supporters of ministers confined themselves to this specific remonstrance, which they contended, and proved, to be insulting, injurious, and dangerous; particularly dwelling on that part of it which presumed to deny the legality of the present parliament, as tending to deprive the people of their representatives, and to annul every act which had passed since the general election. Both houses addressed his majesty, thanking him for his answer to the remonstrance. Several motions were made for an address to his majesty to dissolve the parliament, but these were negatived. Lord Chatham was extremely active in anti-ministerial propositions; and the admirer of the highest wisdom and patriotism of those times must regret, that the heat of party contention should so far have transported this illustrious senator, as to have induced him to countenance and support the very irreverent remonstrance of the city of London.

[Bills regulating elections and repealing all duties on America except on tea.]

An attempt was made to diminish the influence of the crown, by proposing a bill to disqualify certain officers of the revenue from voting for members of parliament; and a motion to this effect was made on the 11th of February. The supporters of the proposition observed, that the chief officers of the revenue were disqualified from sitting in parliament, and that there were the same reasons for incapacitating inferior officers from being electors. Both classes of servants must be under the direction of the crown; and the departments of the revenue were become so numerous, as to render that influence inconsistent with the purposes of a free representation. Ministers replied, that the motion presumed in its objects a dependence and corruption which was not proved; on this presumption, it proposed to place holders of those employments in a worse situation than their fellow countrymen; and thus to deprive many individuals of the rights of British subjects: the motion was rejected. On the 28th, a proposition was made for inspecting the accounts of the civil list during the year 1769. The nation (it was urged) had a right to examine how its late grants had been employed: if the money had been properly used, no inconvenience could accrue to ministers from the inspection; if improperly applied, it was the duty of the house to make the discovery. It was answered, that the civil list being entirely the revenue of the crown, the crown had a right to expend it at will; if an application had been made for an additional grant, the expenditure of the first ought to be investigated to ascertain its necessity; but that not being the case, there were no reasons to require or to justify an examination: on these grounds the motion was negatived.

On the 7th of March, Mr. George Grenville proposed a bill for regulating contested elections. These were formerly tried by a select committee; by degrees the committees were so enlarged, as to become open to every member: so great a number of judges, not bound by oath, decided very often according to party connexion, or some other partiality, instead of justice; and many instances occurred of unfair nominations. To remedy this evil, Mr. Grenville proposed a plan analogous to a trial by jury. Before a contest could be tried, the house must consist of not less than a hundred members; the names of all present were to be put into boxes, and to be drawn out till they amounted to forty-nine: the two litigants were alternately to strike off one of these, till they were reduced to thirteen; these, with two nominees, were to be sworn a select committee, empowered to examine records, papers, and witnesses, and to determine finally. The bill was passed into a law, since well known by the name of the Grenville act, and is considered as having made a very beneficial change in the fairness of decisions.

American affairs began in March to occupy the attention of parliament, and first offered to the public an opportunity of judging of lord North's ministerial talents. The British merchants who traded to America had sustained immense losses by the rejection of their goods; and, apprehending ruin if the associations should continue, presented petitions to parliament, stating their sufferings, and praying its intervention. On the 5th of March, lord North proposed a bill for the repeal of part of the act of 1767, which laid a duty on paper, painted colours, and glass, but continuing the part of the same law which exacted a duty from tea. The minister assigned as a reason for bringing in the bill, the dangerous combinations which the imposts had produced in America, with the losses

[Tumult at Boston. Interference of captain Preston.]

and dissatisfaction which they had caused among the merchants at home. He strongly expressed his disapprobation of the act in question, but censured it as an unproductive impost, not as an impolitic claim: the articles taxed (he said) being chiefly British manufactures, ought to have been encouraged instead of being burthened with assessments. The duty on tea was continued, for maintaining the parliamentary right of taxation. An impost of three-pence in the pound could never be opposed by the colonists, unless they were determined to rebel against Britain. Besides, a duty on that article payable in England, and amounting to nearly one shilling in the pound, was taken off on its exportation to America; so that the inhabitants of the colonies saved nine-pence in the pound. The minister here discovered that he had not investigated the state of affairs, and the sentiments of the people; for a cursory attention to the declarations and acts of the Americans must have demonstrated, that their objection was not to the amount, but to the claim; and experience might have convinced him, that no temporizing expedients, no half measures would be effectual. Different as the professed opinions of the Rockingham administration and of lord North were, their policy sprang from similar indecision. Wishing to please both parties, they left the chief matter in dispute undetermined, and of course a subject of future contention. The members of opposition did not fail to see and to predict the inefficacy of the minister's plan; they repeated the arguments on the injustice and inexpediency of taxing America, and the evils which had arisen from the attempt: the minister's propositions, however, were carried by a great majority. This act may be considered as an omen of lord North's administration; at least, so far as a display of character justifies predictions respecting future conduct and its result. Discerning men saw meritorious intentions and ready ingenuity, without the accompaniment of that enlarged political wisdom, firmness, and decision of mind, which only when united can constitute a beneficial statesman.

The very day on which the resolutions were passed that lord North intended for satisfying the colonies, a quarrel arose at Boston between some of the inhabitants and a party of soldiers. While the troops sent to Boston in 1768 remained in that town, the people had been awed into quietness; but in the end of 1769, a great part of them having been ordered to other quarters, those who remained were treated with the most provoking insolence; they were lampooned and abused in the newspapers; ridiculed and reviled, if met singly or in small bodies in the streets; and disturbed and interrupted in the discharge of their duty. In the evening of the 5th of March, a dispute happened between two or three young men of the town, and as many soldiers, near the barracks;* virulent language produced blows; the soldiers proved victorious, and pursued their adversaries through the streets. The bells were rung to alarm the populace; a mob assembled round the custom-house, and threatened the sentinel's life that was posted there; captain Preston, the officer on guard, sent a party to protect not only the soldier, but the custom-house, and soon after proceeded thither himself. The mob, becoming very violent, attacked the soldiers with stones and clubs; the captain, as long as it was possible, kept his men from firing; but at length, their lives being in danger, they were obliged to use their arms in their own defence: four of

* See Stedman, vol. i. p. 75.

[War between Russia and Turkey.]

the insurgents were killed, and some others wounded: the tumult became much more general, and the rest of the troops were assembled. The governor* having called together the council, they advised the removal of the troops, which was accordingly ordered. Captain Preston surrendered himself for trial, and the soldiers under his command were taken into custody. Every unfair means that could be used were employed to inflame the people against the defendants, and to prejudge the cause. In the newspapers, and various other publications, the troops were represented as guilty of deliberate murder; dead bodies were carried in procession through the town, and held out as the victims of military execution. Fortunately for the cause of justice, the trials were put off for several months, so that the ferment subsided: captain Preston was honourably acquitted; as were all the soldiers, except two, who were convicted of manslaughter.

The account of this tumult arrived in England before the rising of parliament, and it was expected that ministry would have immediately proposed taking it into consideration. They, however, purposely waved the discussion, entertaining great hopes of the conciliatory effect of the recent repeal; and, as the disturbances had taken place when that was not known in America, they trusted that the account of the new resolutions would change their sentiments, and produce dispositions to order, tranquillity, and harmony. They thought it therefore prudent to abstain from investigations which might again inflame the colonists; and the session closed toward the end of May.

A war was now raging on the continent, in which Britain, without actually interfering, warmly favoured one of the parties. For several years it had been part of the British policy to renew and increase that intercourse with Russia, which, from political, but still more from commercial motives, former kings had cultivated, but which had been diminished in the last war by the alliance of the czarina with our enemies. Turkey had been for successive ages on amicable terms with France, and to French ports flowed the greater part of her beneficial commerce. The British government and nation earnestly desired the success of Catharine, our friend and ally, against Turkey, the friend and ally of our rival, and were strongly interested in the events of the war. These at this time diversified public attention, and prevented it from brooding solely on internal contests and colonial disturbances. The war which had been declared between Russia and Turkey, was carried on with great fury by both parties: but by no means with equal ability and skill. Catharine employed the winter of 1768 and 1769 in increasing her armies, and making pecuniary provisions for supporting the war: she also established a new council for military and political affairs, over which she presided herself. The Russian troops, hardy and courageous, had the advantage of great and recent experience, in the wars with Frederick, and the contest with the Poles. The Turks were much inferior to the Russians in military discipline, and for the last thirty years had not been engaged in any war. They had never, like the powers of christian Europe, intro-

* Mr. Hutchinson had been lately appointed to that office. The Americans had petitioned for the removal of sir Francis Bernard; and that gentleman having returned to England to defend himself, vindicated his conduct to the satisfaction and approbation of his sovereign. Disdaining, however, to resume his authority among people who had solicited his annihilation, he resigned his employment.

[Comprehensive views of Catharine. Progress of her armies.]

duced so much of science into their tactics, as, during peace, to improve themselves in the military art; the force and goodness of their armies depended solely on actual exercise, and experience in the field became torpid by long cessation of effort. They had formed their empire by the sword, and had awed the conquered for several centuries by keeping it perpetually drawn. Fear only of the courage and warlike force that they saw incessantly displayed, had kept the Greek christians in a subjection, which, from religious, moral, and political principles, filled them with indignation and abhorrence. They had from religion a very warm attachment to Russia, and since she had arrived at great power, considering her as the natural patron of the Greek faith, they were evidently disposed to seek her protection, whenever an attempt for their relief could be made. Seeing their oppressors, once so terrible, now enervated by long inaction, they began to entertain hopes of emancipation. Informed of the state of Turkey, and of the sentiments of her Grecian brethren, the lofty genius of Catharine conceived, and her bold spirit executed, a project which astonished all Europe. This was, to send from the recesses of the Baltic to the Mediterranean a fleet which should excite and support insurrections of the Greek christians, intercept the intercourse between Constantinople and its granaries in Egypt and other parts of the empire, command the Archipelago and the Levant, and spread alarm through the vast dominions of the sultan. Her mind, capacious and comprehensive as well as inventive, had carried its views to the whole of her interests. She earnestly cultivated the friendship of England, and thereby was powerfully assisted in her naval schemes, by having the advantage of our ports both in this island and Gibraltar, and also of able officers and skilful pilots. By land she made such a disposition of her forces, as was best calculated for speedily rendering the enemy's country the seat of war; and though distant, profiting from the co-operation of her fleet, and diverting the force of her antagonist. The campaign was opened as early as the climate would permit: the Turkish Tartars, accustomed to brave the utmost rigour of the winter, made an incursion into the Russian Ukraine, plundered and desolated the country, before the Russian troops took the field; and, though afterwards obliged to retire, secured their booty. In April, prince Gallitzin, commander-in-chief of the Russians, posted himself on the Niester, to oppose the main army of the Turks, who were marching into Moldavia, while general Romanzow was placed on the Nieper, to watch the Turkish Tartars. Before the arrival of the Turks, Gallitzin attempted to seize Chockzim; but, being strongly fortified and garrisoned, it held out till the arrival of the Turkish army rendered it prudent to desist. The vizier, aware of the superior discipline of the enemy, wisely avoided a general engagement, and harassed the Russians by marches and skirmishes. The Janizaries, abundantly brave, but unused to fatigue, longed for a general battle, in which they assured themselves of a victory that would put an end to their labours, and suffer them to return to the luxuries of the capital. Esteeming the cautious policy of their commanders cowardice, they transmitted intemperate complaints to the divan. The court, weak as wicked, and ignorant as despotic, without inquiry put the vizier to death, and appointed Ali Pacha, a man of fierce brutal courage, his successor. This nomination proved very favourable to the Russians. Ali Pacha gave Gallitzin battle, and was defeated with very great loss; he soon after fought him again, when the Russians ob-

[Jealousy of Austria and Prussia. Affairs of France.]

tained a decisive victory, and reduced the fortress of Chockzim; and before the close of the campaign, they overran Moldavia and Wallachia. The Russians this summer had various engagements with the Polish confederates, but none decisive, as they were obliged by the Turkish war to employ so many troops elsewhere.

It was not till the beginning of the year 1770, that the Russian fleet, under count Orloff, sailed for the Mediterranean: after having been shattered in the North seas, the armament stopped at Portsmouth to refit; and departing, arrived at Port Mahon. After undergoing a second reparation, they sailed from Minorca about the end of February, reached Cape Metapan,* took Missitra,† ravaged the coasts, proceeded to Asia Minor, burnt the Turkish fleet in the harbour of Skio,‡ and, cutting off the communication between European Turkey and the most fertile provinces in other quarters, distressed Constantinople. The Russian armies continued uninterruptedly successful; Romanzow, after repeated victories, one of which at the confluence of the Pruth and the Danube, was glorious and decisive, conquered all Turkey beyond that river except Bessarabia. Here, however, count Panin besieged and took the famous town of Bender by storm, and reduced the whole province. Thus all the Turkish dominions from Poland to the Danube southward, and from Hungary to the Euxine, eastward, were now in the possession of Russia. The neighbouring powers regarded these successes of Catharine with jealousy and apprehension. The house of Austria was much alarmed at the conquests of so ambitious and enterprising a power in its immediate vicinity. Even Frederick, intimately as he was connected with Russia, did not rejoice at her great accession of territory. Two interviews took place this year between the Prussian king and the emperor; at which Joseph declared that neither Maria Theresa nor himself would suffer Catharine to retain Moldavia and Wallachia. Frederick, though he did not differ in sentiment from the emperor on this subject, was desirous of restoring peace between the courts of Petersburg and Constantinople, by such means as would preserve his amity and alliance with Russia, which it was his interest to maintain. Frederick had, at the beginning of their disputes, strongly dissuaded the Turks from going to war with Russia; and the disasters that proceeded from not following his advice, gave him great credit with the Ottoman Porte. He dexterously suggested, without any direct proposition, that they should apply for his mediation; which measure they very readily adopted, and when requested to interfere, he advised them also to apply to the court of Vienna. Though not of themselves disposed to solicit the house of Austria to be their umpire, yet, from their great deference to the opinion of Frederick, they agreed. A negotiation commenced; but, from the jarring interests and views of both the principals and mediators, it met with various obstacles, and did not at that time produce a peace. France, accustomed to take so active a share in the disputes of other European powers, was now occupied in disputes between the king and the parliaments, important in themselves, but still more momentous in the spirit of liberty which they exhibited. She was farther distressed by a scarcity of provisions; and her commercial interests were greatly injured by the bankruptcy of her East India company. On the 16th of May, the nup-

* Anciently Tenarus.

† Sparta.

‡ Chios.

[Dispute with Spain respecting the Falkland islands.]

tials were solemnized between the dauphin, grandson of the king, and the princess Marie Antoinette, daughter of the empress-queen, which many years after had so fatal a dissolution.

In the course of this year, a dispute arose between Britain and Spain, which had nearly terminated in a war: the ground of the contest was, Falkland's islands, in the South Seas. Captain Davis, who, in 1592, had been sent to accompany captain Thomas Cavendish in his last voyage, which proved so fatal,* having either parted with his commodore, or deserted him on the east coast of South America, was driven by storms towards the Straights of Magellan, where he discovered the land now called Falkland's islands; but being in the greatest distress, he left them without observation and without giving them a name. Two years after, sir Richard Hawkins being in the same seas, again saw the islands, and in honour of his queen called them Hawkins's Maiden Land. In 1598, Sebald de West, a Dutch navigator, came to the same islands, and supposing himself the first discoverer, called them, from his own name, Sebald's Islands. England heard nothing more of them for near a century, so that even their existence was called in question. In the reign of king William, however, Strong, an English mariner, found them out, and gave them the name of Falkland's islands.† Some other navigators touched at them in the reign of queen Anne, yet they were still reckoned of no importance; from lord Anson's voyage, however, it was concluded that it would be very beneficial to this nation to have a friendly port and place of refreshment much nearer Cape Horn than the Brazils.‡ In 1748, in consequence of the representation made in Anson's voyage, some sloops were sent to examine Falkland's island, and make farther discoveries in the South Seas. Mr. Wall, the Spanish ambassador, having been informed of this expedition, maintained the right of the Spaniards to the exclusive dominion of the South Sea, and remonstrated against the destination of these ships; but the British ministry declared, that the examination of the Falkland's islands should be their sole object. Similar remonstrances having been made to our ambassador at the court of Spain, the same intentions were avowed. Falkland's islands were no more thought of till after the peace of 1763; when, as has been already mentioned, commodore Byron took possession of them in the name of king George, and represented them as a much more valuable acquisition than had been before conceived. In 1766, the king of Spain sent some troops from Buenos Ayres to the port which had been occupied by the French, and established a settlement there to which he gave the name of Solidade Carlier: in the same year, captain Macbride arrived at Port Egmont, situated on a different island, where he established a garrison. It does not appear, that either of these settlements knew of the other before the year 1769; in the November of which year, captain Hunt, of the Tamar frigate, cruising off the islands, fell in with a Spanish schooner from Solidade: he ordered the vessel to depart from the coast, as belonging to Great Britain. The governor of the Spanish settlement professed

* See Cavendish's Voyages, in the reign of Elizabeth.

† His Journal was never printed, but is in manuscript in the British Museum.

‡ This idea was not new to England though never successfully executed. In the reign of Charles II. sir John Narborough attempted to establish a settlement on the coast of Patagonia; but, though eagerly and liberally supported by the king, he found the design totally impracticable.

[Concession of the court of Spain. Dismission of the duke de Choiseul.]

to suppose that the English commander was there only by accident; but said, that he had no right to send a command to Spaniards in the king of Spain's own dominions. Captain Hunt asserted the claim of the English, from discovery and occupancy. Reciprocal warnings to quit the islands were frequently repeated during the months of December and January, when captain Hunt departed for England. The governor of Buenos Ayres now sent an armament of five frigates to Port Egmont; but captain Farmer of the Swift frigate, and captain Maltby of the Favourite, prepared to defend the garrison, and warned the Spanish commodore to quit that harbour; adding, he might be convinced that the king of Great Britain and the British navy were fully competent to exact satisfaction for any insult that should be offered them by Spain, or any other power. The Spaniards, however, landed their troops under cover of cannon, and invested the garrison. The British commanders having thus ascertained the commencement of hostilities by the Spaniards, and being from the inferiority of force totally unequal to defence, offered terms of capitulation; by which it was stipulated, that the English should within a specified time evacuate Port Egmont. Departing from that island the English captains arrived in England in October. Informed of this proceeding, the British ministry applied to prince Masserano, the Spanish ambassador, who acknowledged that he had heard from Madrid of the transaction; but that Buccarelli, the Spanish governor, had acted without any special orders from his king. Being asked, however, if he would, in the name of his master, disavow Buccarelli's violence, he said, that he could not answer without orders from his court. The British government now directed Mr. Harris, the ambassador at Madrid, to demand the restitution of Falkland's islands, with a disavowal of Buccarelli's hostilities, and in the mean time vigorously prepared a naval armament. The answer of Grimaldi, the Spanish minister, to the first application of Britain, was cold, ambiguous, and unsatisfactory; no particular orders (he said) had been sent to the governor to drive the English from their settlement; but Buccarelli had acted agreeably to the general injunctions of his sovereign, that governors in America should resist encroachments on the Spanish dominions, and therefore had merely done his duty. The court of Spain soon after offered by mutual concession to accommodate their differences; if Britain would disavow the warning given to the Spaniards by captain Hunt, Spain would in like manner disavow the violence of Buccarelli. This proffer was indignantly refused by the court of London; for though captain Hunt had given warning, he had offered no violence; but the Spaniards had committed a hostile aggression; an actual injury had been done to Britain, and must be repaired. The Spanish court persisted in the proposal of reciprocal disavowals: but the English ministers adhered to their first demand, continued their preparations, and at the close of the year, Mr. Harris, the ambassador, was directed to withdraw from Spain. The court of Madrid now assuming a very different tone, showed itself disposed to conciliation at the expense of concession. Spain was at this time chiefly governed by the court of Versailles; and the duke de Choiseul was desirous of engaging both kingdoms in a war with England, in which he hoped the distracted state of the internal and colonial affairs of Britain might render the house of Bourbon successful, and compensate the disasters of the former war; and that he himself, not having to contend

[America. Address of the city of London to the king. His reply.]

against the councils of a Pitt, might acquire triumphant glory. But the duke de Choiseul having in the recent disputes shown himself friendly to the popular party, and having lost the countenance of the king and his mistress, was judged no longer fit to be prime minister, and was dismissed from all his offices. His successor adopted a pacific policy, and this was the principal cause that effected the change in the Spanish propositions.

On the 22d of January, 1771, prince Masserano delivered a declaration of the king of Spain, disavowing the violent enterprise of Buccarelli, and promising to restore Port Egmont and the fort, with all the artillery and stores, according to the inventory taken before the evacuation. The declaration added: this engagement to restore Port Egmont cannot, nor ought, in any wise, to affect the question of the prior right of sovereignty of the Malonine, otherwise called Falkland's islands. Lord Rochford, who had lately succeeded lord Weymouth as secretary of state for the southern department, was instructed by his majesty to answer, that as the court of Spain disavowed the expedition, and bound itself to restitution, the king would look upon that declaration, and the full performance of the engagements, as a satisfaction for the injury.

America was somewhat more tranquil during the present, than in the several preceding years. The want of indulgences, to which they had long been habituated, was severely felt,* and the inhabitants became weary of their combinations. As soon as they were informed that a considerable part of the noxious act was repealed, they resolved to confine their association to the prohibition of tea. The most violent malcontents, indeed, endeavoured to keep the people to the association, on the extensive principle which had been first adopted, but they could not prevail. The trade of this country with America began again to flourish; and subsequent to captain Preston's treatment, there was no material disturbance even in Massachusetts during that year.

The discontents at home were still, however, very prevalent, especially wherever the influence or example of the London citizens could operate. The corporation persevered in remonstrating to his majesty; and on the 23d of May they presented an address still more indecent and disrespectful than that which they had delivered before. Common sense must suppose, that they intended to provoke and insult their sovereign, in making an application which contained such strong and devious reasons for rejection and reprehension; an application to which the king could grant no favourable answer, consistently with regard to the honour of his crown, and the rights of his parliament.† On the address being presented, his majesty answered, "I should have been wanting to the public, as well as to myself, if I had not expressed my dissatisfaction at the late address. My sentiments continue the same; and I should ill deserve to be considered as the father of my people, if I could suffer myself to make such a use of my prerogative, as I cannot but think inconsistent with the interest, and dangerous to the constitution, of the kingdom." To this answer, Beckford, the lord-mayor, requested leave to reply; a request, which, though unusual and indeed unprecedented, his majesty granted. Having deprecated the displeasure which his ma-

* Stedman, vol. i, p. 7.

† See address to the city of London, May 23d, 1770.

[Character of the lord mayor. Parliament. Law of libel.]

jeſty had expreſſed againſt the London remonſtrance, he concluded in terms perhaps the moſt extraordinary that had ever been uſed by a Britiſh ſubject to a Britiſh king: "Permit me, ſire, farther to obſerve, that whoever has already dared, or ſhall hereafter endeavour, by falſe inſinuations and ſuggeſtions, to alienate your majeſty's affections from your loyal ſubjects in general, and from the city of London in particular, and to withdraw your confidence in and regard for your people, *is an enemy to your majeſty's perſon and family, a violator of the public peace, and a betrayer of our happy conſtitution as it was eſtabliſhed at the glorious and neceſſary revolution.*" To this expoſtulation the ſpeaker appeared to expect no answer, and none was given; and his majeſty afterwards intimated his deſire, that ſuch an irregular procedure ſhould not be repeated.

Mr. Beckford was endued with amiable and reſpectable qualities, though by circumſtances and ſituation led to ſo very reprehensible a conduct. Poſſeſſed of immense wealth; placed in a ſociety wherein opulence was deemed a criterion of excellence; receiving from his aſſociates obſequious devotion, as having arrived at the pinnacle of that eminence which they themſelves were reſpectively ſeeking, he did not allow their juſt weight to talents, rank, and high office. Liberal in his donations, ſplendid in his entertainments, magnificent in his diſplays of riches, promoting the wiſhes and deſigns of the city of London, he acquired popularity even to adoration. Accuſtomed to ſuch authority over the claſs of men with whom he was moſt converſant himſelf, he expected the ſame control over others. Highly valuing the city of London on account of its aggregate wealth, its eſtimation of himſelf, and adoption of his ſentiments and views, he fancied that the intimation of its opinions by him ſhould have irreſiſtible authority. Enraged at finding reproachful and imperious remonſtrances to the firſt perſonage in the ſtate diſregarded, he had proceeded to ſtill more flagrant and arrogant irreverence. Beckford's conduct, by ſome charged with republican licentiousneſs, appears much more probably to have ariſen from the pride of wealth ſeeking to overbear rank and dignity, and irritated to rudeneſs and insolence becauſe it was reſſeſſed in its attempt. The flame which he had been ſo inſtrumental in ſpreading, raged after his death: * very violent reſolutions were paſſed in the common council; another remonſtrance to his majeſty was framed, and, being of a ſimilar tenor, deſervedly experienced a ſimilar reception. Petitions and remonſtrances flowed from various parts; but though ſome of them were by no means decorous, yet none of them roſe to the audacity of the London addreſſes. While popular diſcontent was induſtriouſly kept alive, the miniſterial party acquired additional ſtrength in parliament. Mr. George Grenville died in November; and, as the party of which he had been the head, had no longer the ſame bond of connexion, many of its members joined the adminiſtration.

On the 13th of November, parliament met; and the principal internal ſubjects which employed its attention, were the liberty of the preſs, and the rights of juries. Publications ariſing from the Middleſex election, and cenſuring the conduct of parliament and adminiſtration, had been repeatedly the ſubject of judicial animadverſion. Lord Mansfield, in a

* He died June 21ſt, 1770.

[Opinions of lords Mansfield and Camden. Prosecutions of the printers.]

charge to the jury on the criminal trial of Woodfall for publishing Junius's letter to the king, had promulgated the following doctrine: "In cases of libels, juries are to judge of the *facts and tendency only*, but not of the INTENTION; and the truth of the allegations cannot be pleaded in abatement of the guilt." Lords Chatham and Camden in the house of peers, and Messrs. Glynn and Dunning in the house of commons, took the lead in reprobating this doctrine as inimical to the constitutional rights of juries, contrary to law, repugnant to practice, and injurious to the dearest liberties of the people. Lord Mansfield endeavoured to defend and justify his conduct: his directions to juries (he affirmed) were not new; he had proceeded according to the practice of the most approved judges of former times, and uniformly adopted the same mode himself without any question or censure. Lord Camden denied that such a practice was sanctioned by authority, or that by the law of the land juries were circumscribed within stricter limits in the case of libels, than in any other subject of jurisdiction. An inquiry into the conduct of lord Mansfield was proposed, together with an examination of the legal rights of juries, and motions were made for this investigation in both houses, but were negatived. Lord Mansfield left a paper with the clerk of the house, containing the unanimous opinion of the judges in favour of his doctrines. Lord Camden, on the other hand, pledged himself to prove from law and precedent, that this doctrine, though approved by the judges, was not conformable to the law of England: he proposed queries on the tenets of the paper, and desired that a day might be fixed for discussing this question; but lord Mansfield thus challenged to a contest of legal disquisition, either doubtful of victory, or deeming the combat imprudent, declined the invitation. The public was left with an impression, that lord Camden's doctrine, certainly more consistent with constitutional liberty, and with the analogy of the general rights of juries to scrutinize intention as well as to learn mere fact, was virtually admitted to be also conformable to law and precedent. If lord Mansfield could have proved the alleged exceptions in the case of libels, it was conceived that he would have adduced his proofs, in order to prevent future animadversion, as well as to justify his past jurisdiction. Men of ability and knowledge, who without considering either precedented opinions, or practice, merely argued from reason and conscience, could not discover why INTENTION should not be taken into the juridical account in estimating defamatory guilt, when intention was necessary to constitute guilt of every other species.

Defamation was, indeed, never more licentious, than at the present time, on political subjects. One very common expedient of party calumny was, misrepresentation of parliamentary speeches in newspapers, so as to render them either absurd or odious. Two printers,* alleged to be most culpable in these injurious mistatements, were summoned to the bar of the house, but paid no attention to the intimation. The serjeant at arms was ordered to take them into custody: they were not to be found. Six other printers were commanded to appear before the house on similar charges; five of them obeying were reprimanded and dismissed, but the sixth* still disregarding the notice, was ordered to be

* Thomson, of the Gazette; and Wheble, of the Middlesex Journal.

† Miller, of the London Evening Post.

[Singular confederacy for bribery.]

taken into custody. The three printers, being severally apprehended in the city, were carried respectively before Mr. Alderman Wilkes, Mr. Alderman Oliver, and Crosby the lord-mayor; who not only discharged the printers, but required the officers who had executed the warrants to give bail to appear at the next sessions, to stand trial for assault and false imprisonment. Informed of these transactions, the house was filled with indignation, and the lord-mayor was ordered to attend in his place. The magistrate justified his conduct on the ground of his oath of office compelling him to preserve inviolate the franchises of the city; one of which was, that by the charters no citizen could have law process served against him, but by the city officers. It was asserted by the commons, that the exemption of the city could not be pleaded against the privileges of the house. This doctrine, invalidating chartered rights, and the act of parliament by which they were sanctioned, being supported neither by precedent nor argument, was strongly controverted in the house, but was admitted by very great majorities. The house directed the records respecting their messenger to be expunged, and all proceedings to be stopped. With this order, by which one branch of the legislature proposed to suspend the law of the land, the magistrate refused to comply; and Crosby and Oliver were committed to confinement, for what the commons styled contumacy. The city of London, by its proceedings ever since the Middlesex election, was extremely offensive to ministry and its supporters in parliament; and the house of commons in this instance was evidently actuated by resentment rather than guided by magnanimous and sound policy. Many who had most severely censured the remonstrances of the city, blamed this procedure against its principal magistrates, as a violent, impolitic, and illegal attack upon persons, whose conduct, however deserving of reprehension, did not render such animadversion either wise or just. Indeed, ministers themselves appeared to have thought that they had carried their violence too far. They summoned Mr. Wilkes to repair to the house; but he refused to attend in any other character than as member for Middlesex. They issued orders for his appearance at the bar on the 8th of April; but, aware that he would not attend, they some days before adjourned the house to the 9th. This palpable evasion impressed the public with an opinion, that the commons were now either sensible that they had done what was wrong, or were afraid to do what they conceived to be right. The city of London actively supported its magistrates during these transactions, and insisted that the whole charge of their prosecution and defence should be defrayed by the corporation. Their confinement could only continue till parliament was prorogued, and at the end of the session they were liberated. This imprisonment of the magistrates fanned the popular flame, injured instead of serving the cause of government, and greatly diminished the respect of the people for their representatives. So pernicious is it for either lawgivers or judges to deliberate or decide under the influence of violent passion or prejudice.*

A select committee, appointed agreeably to Mr. Grenville's late bill for determining a contested election for the borough of Shoreham in Sussex, brought to light about this time a remarkable scene of corruption. The returning officer had declared a candidate supported by only thirty-

* See in Sallust, *Cæsar's* speech on the punishment of the conspirators.

[Opposition censure ministry for accepting the terms proposed by Spain.]

seven voters duly elected, in preference to another who had eighty-seven in his favour. When examined by the committee on what appeared to be so flagrant a partiality, he in his exculpatory evidence established the following facts. The majority of freemen of the corporation had formed themselves into a society which they called the christian club, professedly to promote pious and charitable purposes; and several acts were occasionally performed to accredit their profession. But the real object of the combination was, to sell the borough to the highest bidder, and distribute the money among the pious confederates. Paying to religion that homage which conscience often exacts from men violating its most sacred duties, they bound themselves by solemn oaths to fidelity in their associated villany; and added legal instruments, in bonds with large penalties, to secure their adherents to this illegal engagement. These professed religionists then, without scruple, took the oath against bribery and corruption. The returning officer had himself belonged to the club, but, being disgusted with their conduct, had quitted their party. Aware of their principles and established practice, he by vigilance ascertained, and was able to prove, that a sum of money had been distributed among eighty-one of the majority, whose votes, therefore, in his return he had not estimated. The officer was censured for his assumption of illegal power; but the facts being proved, a law was made, incapacitating the eighty-one freemen from voting at elections.

Of external politics, the only important subject of discussion this year was, the satisfaction offered by Spain concerning Falkland's islands, and accepted by this country. According to opposition, the proffer of Spain, accompanied with the reservation of a right to the subject in dispute, was neither a satisfaction for past injury, nor a security against future. We had been obliged to prepare armaments, which cost us three millions sterling; and it was strictly just, that Spain should indemnify us for an expenditure which originated in her aggression, and increased to its present amount by her reluctance. The convention had procured no recompense for this enormous expense; but even as a restitution, Port Egmont, and not all Falkland's islands had been ceded; whereas our right to the whole was as clear as to that part. Although the court of Madrid had disavowed the act of hostility as proceeding from particular instruction, yet she had justified it as implied in her general directions to American governors. Ministers ought to have demanded the disavowal of this general order, and of the exorbitant and absurd claim to exclusive dominion in the South Sea, on which it was founded. By the law of nations, and even by the treaty of Utrecht, we were entitled to demand the punishment of Buccarelli: we ought also to have exacted the complete settlement of the Manilla ransom: in short, the agreement, neither complete nor decisive, contained the seeds of future hostility. Ministers replied, that the claim to Falkland's islands had never been allowed by Spain. Our people had really given the first insult, by warning the Spaniards to depart from an island which they considered as their own. Spain had given up the British settlement and property which her officers had seized; and what more could be expected from the most successful war? Indemnification for expense was a redress which, in modern treaties of peace, it was very unusual for a victor to demand. We had supported and satisfied the honour of England; and our dignity being secure, our interest required that we should live upon the most amicable terms with

[Difference between the two houses of parliament. Supplies.]

a country with which we had the closest commercial ties. War with Spain would soon have joined France in the same cause, more closely have cemented the alliance between these powers, and involved us in hostilities with the whole house of Bourbon. They accused opposition of a desire to embroil this country in a war with Spain, in hopes that some disaster might ensue, which would expose administration to the public resentment, and drive them from office.* A great majority of both houses, after very violent debates, declared their approbation of the convention with Spain.

The discussion of this subject incidentally caused a disagreement between the two houses, which lasted through the whole session. Before the adjustment was completed, the duke of Manchester made a motion for an address to expedite our preparations, recommending at the same time certain dispositions of our forces. Ministers thinking these discussions not prudent before strangers, of whom there was a great number in the house, proposed that the house should be cleared. There happened at this time to be several members from the other house attending with a bill, and these were included in the order for departure. The commons considering this procedure as derogatory from their dignity, gave a similar order for exclusion, without the exception of peers. The misunderstanding, for the last three months of the session, prevented all intercourse between the houses, except in mere matters of business; and, to the great disappointment and displeasure of the public, excluded all others from both.

The supplies which were granted this session under the apprehension of a war with Spain, were liberal. The ways and means were, a loan of 1,800,000*l.* on exchequer bills; an increase of land tax to four shillings; a lottery; the surplusage of the sinking fund; a small tonnage upon shipping; with additional duties on tobacco, teas, spirits, wines, and other foreign goods. These taxes, chiefly affecting luxuries, met with little opposition or animadversion. Indeed, this budget manifested merely common official experience, and neither proved the minister to possess, nor to want, financial talents. Parliament being prorogued on the 8th of May, closed a session more remarkable for the contentious violence of its debates, and the passionate heat of its propositions, than for the wisdom of its deliberations, or the importance of its decrees.

* This charge, though advanced in parliament, was much more explicitly detailed in ministerial writings, and especially in Dr. Johnson's celebrated pamphlet upon Falkland's islands.

CHAP. X.

State of the colonies.—Effects of lord North's conciliatory attempt.—Striking diversity of sentiment and spirit between New-England and other colonies—is not sufficiently regarded by ministers.—Discontents in England begin to subside.—Meeting of parliament.—Petition for exemption from subscribing the thirty-nine articles.—Opposed by one class on grounds of theological principle—by another on political expediency.—Petition of the dissenters.—Houghton's bill for the relief of the dissenters is passed the house of commons, but thrown out by the lords.—Clerical nullum tempus bill is rejected.—Law for restricting the marriage of the royal family.—Arguments against it—for it—passed.—East India affairs.—Supplies.—Session rises.—Death of the princess dowager of Wales.—Operations between Russia and Turkey.—Scheme of Frederick and Catharine for petitioning Poland.—Offer Austria a share—she objects to the inequality of the division—her scruples are vanquished by a larger distribution.—Dismemberment of Poland.—Revolution in Sweden.—State of Denmark.—Incapacity of the king.—Character and conduct of the queen.—Artifices of the queen-dowager.—Struensee.—Accusation and arrest of Matilda.—Remonstrances of the court of London.—His Britannic majesty demands and rescues his suffering sister—and affords her an asylum in his German dominions.

THE act of 1770 did not fully satisfy the wishes of the American people; in most of the colonies, however, its influence was so great, that during 1771 tranquillity prevailed. There were, indeed, in all the provinces, demagogues who strenuously endeavoured to convince their countrymen that the repeal had been extorted by resistance, and not conceded by justice; and that therefore they ought to persist in opposing British government, until every disagreeable law should be rescinded. But the middle and southern colonies, now not actually feeling any grievance in the operation of the duty, were not to be disturbed by abstract claims, and a general calm succeeded to the late ferment. New-England, however, and especially Massachusetts Bay, was far from being equally quiet. The establishment of a board of customs, necessary for the effectual execution of the navigation act, and the activity of the navy officers in preventing contraband practices at the beginning of their opposition, had not been an ostensible subject of dissatisfaction; but they now expressed their sentiments openly against customs. In an address to the governor on the 5th of July, 1771, they declared customs to be a tribute extorted from those who had a right to the absolute disposal of their property; and the principle now assumed, was a disavowal of the supremacy of Britain, which from the first establishment of the colonies had been acknowledged in America. The other provinces had objected to taxes, as an unconstitutional innovation; they asserted the claims of British subjects, and as British subjects required redress. The colonists of Massachusetts spoke and acted as members of independent communities; and the general tenor of their conduct manifested a disposition to separate from Great Britain as soon as a favourable opportunity should offer. The concessions which tranquillized their southern brethren, only served to render those turbulent republicans more insolent and violent. Ever since the removal of the troops, they had insulted, attacked, and

[Discontents in England begin to subside. Parliament.]

abused the custom-house officers, and other servants of the crown ; and demonstrated that nothing would restrain them from injustice and tumult, but an armed force. Had the British ministry accurately studied the diversity of provincial character, and employed able, popular, and eloquent men, to court and conciliate the southern and middle colonies, counteract the arts of the northern emissaries, and detach the votaries of monarchy from the abettors of republicanism, it is by no means improbable that they might have prevented the revolt from being general ; and, if they had effected that great purpose, they would have had little difficulty in compelling, by vigour and decision, the democratical agitators of Massachusetts to perform the duties of British subjects : but no such experiment was tried. Lord North appears to have formed no comprehensive plan for the government of America ; but to have satisfied himself with devising temporary expedients for removing particular discontents, as they showed themselves in overt acts of sedition and violence, without investigating principles and causes, or framing any general system either of conciliation or coercion.

In England, hostility to government became less violent. The city of London, indeed, persevered in imperious expostulation with the sovereign ; while the king had the magnanimous patience to answer insolent rudeness with mild politeness, and gave a very temperate though decisive denial, including a poignant censure for so frequent a repetition of such an absurd address. The discontents of the metropolis, however, were diverted by a schism between Wilkes and some of his late supporters ; especially Mr. Horne, afterwards so noted as a politician, and eminent as a philologist. These private disputes long occupied the adverse champions, and filled the press : though their causes and details be of no historical importance, yet their existence requires to be mentioned, since they tended to the diminution of those inflammatory proceedings which so long had disturbed the public peace. In other parts the dissatisfaction became more languid in its efforts ; its outrageous violence seemed to be passed ; and though in some places it manifested a gloomy sullenness, yet, on the whole, a dawning prospect opened of returning tranquillity.

The situation of affairs abroad contained no grounds of apprehension respecting the peace of Great Britain : Spain had fulfilled her engagements by restoring Port Egmont ; and France continuing the scene of internal disturbance, which was heightened by the profligate and odious character of the duke d'Aguillon (now favourite and prime minister,) appeared to be without any intention of annoying her neighbours. Eastern Europe was occupied either as actors in hostile scenes, or very vigilant and interesting spectators. The year 1771 was therefore favourable to internal and colonial quiet, and threatened no interruption from abroad. Ministers acquired fresh accessions from the party of Mr. Grenville ; besides, members of other connexions were now tired of opposing an administration that appeared to them firmly established.

On the 22d of January 1772, parliament assembled ; and the first day's debate showed much less of asperity and acrimony, than the prelude efforts to the contentions of the former sessions. The business of importance which earliest in the session engaged the attention of parliament, was a motion of ministers for voting twenty-five thousand seamen for the service of the current year. The French, it was said, had sent

[Petition for exemption from the thirty-nine articles.]

a strong fleet to India, it was therefore necessary for England to send thither a still more powerful force; the Spaniards had also a considerable armament in the West Indies, it was requisite for this country to overmatch them in that quarter; and the war between the Turks and Russians rendered it proper to employ a stronger fleet in the Mediterranean, than was wanted in the time of peace. Opposition contended, that the force was greater than the exigency of the country demanded; but they suffered the motion to be carried without any division.

Early in this session came before parliament, for the first time, a subject which has since been very frequently agitated, and has produced a vast variety of literary and political discussion. On the 6th of February, a petition was presented to the lower house, from some clergymen of the church of England, certain members of the learned professions of law and physic, and others, praying to be relieved from the necessity of subscribing the thirty-nine articles. Men had an inherent right, they said, held from God only, and subject to no human authority, to use their own judgment in the interpretation of scripture. This natural right, they affirmed, was recognized by the original principles of reformation. Such a privilege, belonging to them as men and protestants, was violated by the imposition of subscriptions to certain articles of faith, that did not flow from Christ and his apostles, but were drawn up by human beings as fallible as themselves. These subscriptions were farther represented as a great hindrance to the diffusion of true religion, by discouraging the study of the real sense of the scriptures, and creating animosities among fellow protestants: the diversity of opinions held by the established clergy concerning some of the articles caused dissensions, and the disputes among professed believers encouraged infidelity. The petitioning members of the two other learned professions complained, that they suffered peculiar hardships in being obliged at their first admission to the university (*matriculation*), when so immature in age and knowledge for deep disquisitions, to subscribe to a variety of theological propositions, in order to attain academical degrees in their respective faculties, while their opinions on those subjects could be of no consequence, either to the public, or their employers in their professions. The supporters of the petition argued on the advantages of extending religious toleration; and endeavoured to show, that the articles were in some parts contradictory, and in others totally indefensible. They enlarged on the principal topics set forth in the petition itself; and concluded with observing, that, on granting the requested relief, many of the dissenters, being no longer deterred by articles, would join the established church.

By two classes was this petition opposed: the one consisted of the tory and high church gentlemen, who considered the thirty-nine articles as the bulwark of the church of England, and of christianity itself. In the last century the church, and with it the state, fell, through such innovations. Parliament, they contended, could not grant the desired relief, because it could not annul the obligations of an oath. The king could not comply with their petition, as he was bound by oath to preserve the established church; a compliance would also be a breach of the articles of union, as by them it was stipulated, that the ecclesiastical governments of Scotland and England should continue for ever unchanged. Writings of late had appeared, inimical to the most important articles, not only of the church of England, but of the christian faith; they had

[Different grounds of opposition to the petition.]

denied the doctrines of the trinity, and the divinity of our Saviour; and thus endeavoured to remove the corner stone of our religion: by granting the petition, therefore, we should admit unitarians and other heretics to be clergymen of the church of England.

A greater number of members opposed the petition on political grounds.* They vindicated its advocates from the charge of heretical opinions; they maintained, that the legislature had still a control over the articles of union, and had exercised that control towards the two churches; in England, by an act against occasional conformity; and in Scotland, by an act annulling the popular election of clergyman. Every society, they observed, is competent to determine the qualifications of its members; all governments have a right to constitute the several orders of their subjects, to ascertain that the principles and characters of persons employed in any trust be such as will most effectually answer the purposes of those trusts. The office of public instructors of the people in virtue and religion, requires a careful examination of the capacity, dispositions, principles, and opinions of the persons proposing to officiate. The clergy being intended to teach the nation, it is expedient that there should be an uniformity of established doctrine, the chief tenets of which every clergyman should admit. Admissibility to the clerical, as well as to any other public office, is a question of expediency; and this is no hardship: a candidate has the alternative, of refusing either the employment, or subscription. Physicians and civilians are in the same predicament, required to subscribe certain articles, or not to become members of an English university. It is found expedient that there should be a national church for the preservation and promotion of christianity, and for the welfare of society. These articles are considered by the legislature as conducive to the purposes in view; therefore law gives ought to require the admission of them in the holders of employments which are connected with the objects of that national church. On these strong and comprehensive grounds of equitable policy, many enlightened senators, who were not votaries of the high church doctrines, joined in defending our ecclesiastical establishment against innovation. The majority against the petition was two hundred and seventeen to seventy-one.

In the course of the debates, not a few of the opposers of the petition had expressed an opinion, that though it was just and reasonable to require subscription from persons proposing to be clergymen in the established church, and to derive profit from the priesthood, it was hard to oblige dissenting ministers to subscribe the *doctrinal* articles of the church, from which they sought neither promotion nor emolument. By the act of toleration, dissenters were allowed to exercise divine worship according to their own sentiments, if their ministers subscribed all the articles of the church except those which relate to discipline. When that act was passed, dissenters were as warmly attached to the Calvinistic doctrines of the articles as churchmen themselves, and readily subscribed them as required by law. During the last two reigns, it had appeared that Arianism and Socinianism became very prevalent; few of the dissenters for many years had subscribed the articles, and thus were liable to penalties, though from the liberality of the age, and the lenient government of the house of Brunswick, these were very rarely inflicted.

* Parliamentary debates, 1772.

[Bill for the relief of dissenters. Clerical *nullum tempus* bill.]

Sir Henry Houghton made a motion to relieve the dissenters from subscriptions and the penal laws, but was warmly opposed by the high church gentlemen. The dissenters, it was said, by omitting to subscribe, had violated the law of the land; and the transgressors, not satisfied with being excused, desired the law to be changed in order to accommodate a change in their opinions. A total exemption from subscription would open the way to heresy and infidelity. The dissenters were a respectable body, and a certain regard was due to their opinions; but the present bill, instead of proposing the mere relief of non-conformists, was a project for encouraging schism, and ultimately destroying the church of England; many of the dissenters now maintained doctrines totally different from those of former times, and were inimical to the church of England, to the protestant religion, and to true christianity: to encourage such men, therefore, would be equally contradictory to sound policy, and to the interests of the established faith. The supporters of the bill contended, that subscriptions, while they operated against the pious and conscientious, are no restraints on the impious and wicked. The sectarians were charged with having deviated from the theological opinions of their predecessors; but in all ranks of a community advancing in knowledge and civilization, the more understandings were exercised, the greater would be the diversity in the result of different efforts. That some individual dissenters held principles inimical to christianity, might be true; but the charge against them as a body was totally false: they had been uniformly the friends of civil and religious liberty, had supported the British constitution, the establishment of the house of Brunswick, and all those principles and measures by which our constitutional rights were upheld: they had moreover supported the christian faith against its most ardent impugnors; and such men certainly deserved to enjoy something more than mere impunity by connivance. By toleration, christianity had flourished; by intolerance, the number of believers had been lessened:* let protestants be united, that we may be the better able to make head against infidels. These considerations induced a great majority in the house of commons to vote for the bill; but in the house of lords the bishops exerted themselves so strenuously against an indulgence which they conceived and represented to be dangerous to the church, that the bill was rejected by no less than a hundred and two to twenty-nine.

During this session also, another bill was proposed on an ecclesiastical subject, entitled the church *nullum tempus* bill; the object of which was analogous to the purpose of the crown *nullum tempus* law, to secure land possessors against dormant claims of the church. On the part of the church it was answered, that the power of reviving claims was necessary to prevent the laity from effecting those encroachments which they were always desirous of making upon the clergy. The proposed bill would be peculiarly injurious to the poor clergy, whom great landholders, and combinations of rich farmers were very much disposed to oppress. The supporters of the bill replied, that its provisions guarded against the alleged inconveniences: and they defied its opponents to

* Burke's speech on sir Henry Houghton's motion. Parliamentary debates, 1772.

[Bill restricting the marriage of the royal family.]

prove that the laity did oppress the clergy. Ministers, desirous of gratifying the hierarchy, were very inimical to a bill which tended to abridge clerical power. To independent members, however, it appeared so reasonable, that notwithstanding the influence of administration, the majority by which it was negatived was very inconsiderable.

While parliament was occupied in examining the extent and boundaries of religious indulgence, and admitting the equity and wisdom of liberal toleration, prevented it from intrenching on the establishment, a subject was submitted to their deliberation, which involved the most important duties of morality, and the closest ties of civil society: this was a bill for restraining the royal family in the momentous engagement of marriage; the proposition of which arose from the following incidents. The duke of Gloucester had espoused the countess dowager of Waldegrave; and the duke of Cumberland, Mrs. Horton, a widow, and daughter to lord Irnham. These marriages, which had been concluded clandestinely, gave great dissatisfaction at court. On the 28th of February, the king sent a message to both houses of parliament, importing, that his majesty thought it would be wise and expedient in parliament to render effectual the right which had always belonged to the kings of this realm, of approving all marriages of the royal family, to supply the defects of the law now in being; and, by some new provision, more effectually to guard descendants of his late majesty (excepting the issue of princesses affianced into foreign families) from marrying without the approbation of his majesty, his heirs, or successors. In consequence of this message, a bill was brought into the house of lords for rendering all the descendants of George II. (with the exception above mentioned) incapable of contracting marriage without the consent of the king, or his successors on the throne, signified under the great seal, and declared in council. There was in the bill, however, one deviation from the tenor of the royal message; for if such descendant, after passing the age of twenty-five years, gave the privy-council twelve months previous notice of his intended marriage, unless both houses of parliament within that time declared their disapprobation, it might be valid without the royal consent. The bill was strongly opposed by both houses, on grounds of law, policy, and morality. It was denied that the power declared in the preamble to have belonged to the king, actually did constitute part of the royal prerogative in the extent now claimed; as a fact, it was not to be found in our history;* nor as law, in our statutes, precedents, or the opinions of our judges. The declaration of law was, besides, either useless or hurtful: if intended to have no retrospective operation, it was frivolous and unnecessary; if designed as a retrospect, it was iniquitous. The descendants of George II. might in time comprehend great numbers who were dispersed among the various ranks of civil life; and thus many families would, in their most important engagements, become dependent on the crown. The time of non-age too, was by this law lengthened beyond just limits; it was disrespectful to the royal offspring to suppose, that they did not arrive at intellectual maturity so soon as other

* The instances adduced by the supporters of the bill did not prove the assertion of a legal right in the king to interfere in the marriage of his relations, they showed only the influence of the sovereign's authority, which inclination or prudence induced his family to regard.

[Arguments for and against the bill. It is passed into a law.]

subjects; and it was farther absurd, that when at eighteen a prince or princess was deemed qualified to govern a kingdom, they should not till twenty-six be fit to contract a marriage. The discretionary power, wherever vested, of prohibiting any marriage, was a violation of the inherent rights of human nature, founded on the strongest propensity implanted in man for the best of purposes. No legislature was competent to the annihilation of this right. It had, moreover, a natural tendency to rouse a disputed title to the crown; for, should those who might be affected by it be in power, they would procure a repeal of the act, and consequently produce a contest with the next heir under that law; should they not be in power, they would still excite compassion and indignation among those who must think them aggrieved by such a restriction, and hence dissension and civil war would ensue. The prohibition was also contrary to morality; for, as far as it reached, it was calculated to promote debauchery, seduction, and other vices, which marriage tended to prevent. Depriving those personages of the highest blessings of life, partners of their own approbation and choice, it drove them, in the unavoidable course of human passion, to illicit connexions, to concubinage, to promiscuous intercourse; and if it did not justify, at least palliated, in individuals so restricted, deviations from strict and rigorous virtue, much more than in any other subject not so circumscribed.*

By the supporters of the bill it was argued, from a variety of cases, that the kings of England always possessed the power now declared. Ten judges had, in 1717, delivered an opinion, which admitted the king's right to direct the marriage and education of the royal family. The judges, when consulted concerning the present bill, had determined, that the power claimed belonged to the king, as far as respected the marriages of his children, grandchildren (unless the issue of foreign families) and the presumptive heir of the crown. It was farther observed, that the dishonour reflected on the crown by improper alliances, and the evils experienced formerly by the nation from the intermarriage of the royal family with subjects, rendered it necessary to guard in future against either derogatory or dangerous connexions. The sovereign is the natural guardian and judge of the honour, dignity, and conduct of his family. The subjects of the bill might in time greatly increase in number, yet it was not to be supposed that the sovereign, in the multiplicity of momentous affairs, would interfere beyond his near relations, or other probable heirs; but should future inconveniences, not now foreseen, arise from the bill, the legislature was always competent to apply a remedy. The bill was passed by a considerable majority; and from this time no marriage concluded by a descendant of George II. under twenty-six years of age, without the consent of the king, or of both houses of parliament after that age, is lawful. Whether the law be wise or unwise, is another question; but the fact is, that without compliance with this statute, no person so circumstanced can be lawfully married, nor have legitimate offspring.

The attention of parliament was also called this session to East India affairs. It was generally acknowledged, that great abuses prevailed in the administration of the company's possessions; but the extent of the

* Parliamentary debates, 1772.

[Affairs of the East Indies. Supplicas.]

evils was not hitherto ascertained in either house. The company was aware of the very flagrant delinquency that existed among its servants, but was desirous of retaining in itself the means of correction and future prevention. The directors were far from wishing the interference of government, and much alarmed by the doctrines that had been advanced concerning their territorial possessions; knowing too, that the misconduct of their servants afforded to government and to the legislature, very strong reasons for taking an active concern in the territorial administration of British India, they were very desirous of making it appear that they were themselves competent to the task. Admitting the abuses by their servants, they pretended to have discovered the causes, and proposed, by removing them, to apply effectual remedies. They had, they said, hitherto allowed too much power to their servants, and now proposed to reduce executorial authority, and to extend their own. For this purpose, Mr. Sullivan, the deputy chairman, proposed in the house of commons a bill for the better regulation of the company's servants and affairs in India, by restraining the governor and council from every species of trade, entirely changing the court of judicature and mode of administering justice in Bengal, and restricting the power of the executive servants. In supporting his motion, he severely attacked lord Clive as the principal transgressor. Lord Clive, defending himself and retorting on the company, imputed the chief abuses to their misconduct and violence: reciprocal recrimination produced from both very minute and copious details, which confirmed other members in their opinion that there existed flagrant delinquency. Ministers, without discussing the charges of either party, expressed their fears that the evils were too deep and extensive for the bill to remedy; and it would, they said, be premature to form any plan of correction and prevention, before inquiry should be made as to the actual state of affairs. The bill was rejected: a select committee of thirty-one was soon after appointed to inquire into the nature and state of affairs in India; and this committee found the subject of their inquiries so very extensive and complicated, that they asked and obtained leave to sit during the recess.

On the 1st of May, lord North entered on the business of ways and means: and showed that, after providing for the service of the current year, the nation, without fresh taxes, was able to pay off two millions and a half of three per cent. annuities, then at ninety; he also enlarged on the prospect of peace, which he said might be reasonably expected to last ten years, and would liquidate a considerable part of our debts. Besides, even should peace be broken, *lord North professed himself* such an economist, as to be able to carry on war without the addition of new taxes.* The house was pleased with the flattering picture, and the minister acquired great credit with parliament and the country for his financial ability. As the English are by no means averse from war, many were delighted with the notion that they were blessed in lord North with a statesman who could beat their enemies without troubling them for farther contributions. In his plan of reducing the national debt, they anticipated the reduction of their present taxes, and he now by fair promises began to acquire considerable popularity and reputation; but the chief foundation of lord North's fame at this time was his *economy*.

* See parliamentary debates, May 1st, 1772.

[Death of the princess dowager of Wales. Operations between Russia and Turkey.]

A session, which, by its moderation, afforded a striking contrast to the preceding years of the present parliament, ended on the 9th of June. During this session on the 8th of February, died the princess dowager of Wales. Her royal highness was of an amiable private character, and had long been highly esteemed and beloved by the British nation. During the latter part of her life, the sentiments of many persons had been changed, from surmises that rested on no certain grounds. When our present sovereign ascended the throne, it was alleged that, possessing great influence with a son of the warmest filial affection, she interfered in public affairs, and held the chief direction of the secret cabinet, which, according to the political hypothesis of popular speakers and writers, commanded all the ostensible ministers. A precise and definite motive was assigned for the supposed efforts of this imputed influence; the opposition to Mr. Pitt in the council; the dismissal of the whig party; the peace; the prosecution of Wilkes; the taxation of America; the Middlesex election; and the promotion of the Scotch: in short, every act disagreeable to the people of England was ascribed to a secret power flowing from the princess and a junto of her favourites. Though this theory was very generally received, yet an authentic historian, having neither oral nor written testimony, cannot record as a fact the existence of such an influence. It is, however, his duty to mention such generally believed rumours or conjectures, as have a great influence on the period concerning which he writes. That such a report and apprehension greatly influenced the popular notions of the first ten years of the reign, is very evident; but that neither the votaries of the opinion nor the spreaders of the rumour have adduced evidence to confirm the truth of their assertion, is equally certain. Having therefore *no proof of the fact*, I cannot, consistently with sound philosophy, assign this influence as the cause of the many evils which have been so often ascribed to it both in and out of parliament. In estimating the character of the princess dowager, I cannot, therefore, allow weight to her alleged interference in public affairs. Her highness was eminent for her private virtues in the various relations of life: as a wife, a mother, a mistress of a family, an exalted member of society, her conduct bore the manifest marks of benevolence and propriety; and in none of her sentiments or actions did she give the slightest indication of her being actuated by the dispositions which are assumed by political partisans.

This year was replete with important events on the continent of Europe. The Russians, in the campaign of 1771, although ultimately successful on the Danube, did not obtain such signal advantages in that quarter, as were expected from their progress in the two former years. In Crim Tartary they were decisively victorious, and reduced the whole peninsula, and in the Mediterranean they annihilated the commerce of Turkey. Negotiations were renewed in winter under the mediation of the courts of Berlin and Vienna, but were not brought to the desired conclusion. The Austrians were jealous of the progress of the Russians, both in Turkey and in Poland. They protected the confederates as far as they could, without openly manifesting hostility to Russia, or giving umbrage to Frederick. At length, Maria Teresa made claim to the Polish district of Zips, on the frontiers of Hungary, and in autumn 1771 invaded it with a powerful force. The empress of Russia, enraged at the invasion of Poland, said to prince Henry of Prussia, who was then

[Combination for the partition of Poland.]

at her court, *If Vienna attempt to dismember Poland, neighbouring states must imitate her example.* This observation perfectly accorded with Frederick's ideas. His troops had that very year entered Poland, under pretence of forming a cordon, to prevent the infection of the plague from spreading to his dominions; and his army had afterwards advanced, on the pretext of relieving the inhabitants from the oppressions of the confederates. By Frederick's orders, his soldiers had for these services exacted enormous contributions from Polish Prussia, and especially from the city of Dantzic; and this plunder of communities at peace with Frederick was sent to his treasury. The present overture was only a proposal for another robbery on a larger scale. Frederick lost no time in inquiring whether Catharine was sincere; and being assured that she was serious, he drew up a plan of dividing Poland between the three powers; very skilfully and considerably partitioning the territories, so as to give each of the partners the share respectively most contiguous and convenient. This participation he concerted with Catharine, before he communicated the project to Austria. Russia was to have all that territory which extends on the eastern side of the Druce and the Dwina, from the gulf of Riga to the Ukraine; Austria was to have the offer of Ludomeria and Galicia, on the confines of Hungary; while the king of Prussia, for his share, was to receive Pomerellia; which besides other advantages, joined together Pomerania and Prussia, and thus, instead of two detached, gave him three compact provinces. Having settled this plan with Russia, Frederick next proposed it to the imperial minister; thinking it so advantageous, that it would certainly be accepted. Prince Kaunitz, the Austrian minister, at first made strong objections to the division, *BECAUSE** it would be next to impossible to agree on terms of perfect equality. In an affair of such a nature, as Frederick observed, † *it was no time to be discouraged by trifles.* Catharine and he therefore intimated an alternative to Austria, if she would not agree to the division they would go to war with her, without allowing her any share; but if she would become a willing party, a larger seizure of Poland should be made, to suit *her ideas of equality.* Austria at last consented; a treaty was concluded, and each of the three acquired a greater portion than was originally intended. Having thus on friendly terms arranged the seizure of territories belonging to neither, they thought proper to intimate to the proprietors the proposed spoliation. A joint manifesto, drawn up by the three powers, set forth the troubles excited in Poland on almost every vacancy of the throne, and the friendly offices of the court of Petersburg in rectifying many abuses in the constitution of that republic. The court of Berlin claimed the credit of having seconded these generous acts; and Austria had chosen neutrality, as the means of promoting the active efforts of Catharine and Frederick. From the wise and benevolent policy of her beneficent neighbours, Poland had every prospect of prosperity, peace, and happiness; but a spirit of discord had counteracted these efforts, and to re-establish tranquillity in Poland, Russia, Austria, and Prussia found it necessary to place the ancient constitution of the kingdom, and the liberties of the

* See the king of Prussia's Memoirs of himself; from which the greater part of our account of this partition is compiled.

† See the Memoirs.

[Dismemberment of Poland. Revolution in Sweden.]

people, on a sure and solid foundation. They had respectively considerable claims on the republic, which each would be ready to justify in time and place, by authentic records and solid reasons. Meanwhile, having reciprocally communicated their several claims, and being mutually satisfied of their justice, they had determined to secure to themselves a proportionable equivalent, by taking immediate and effectual possession of such parts of the territories of the republic, as might serve to fix more natural and sure bounds between her and the three powers.* The confederate partitioners did actually specify their pretensions, but without adducing any proof. The court of Warsaw answered† these denunciations by just and conclusive reasoning, founded on the plainest principles of jurisprudence, equity, and moral rectitude; demonstrating from the law of nations and many particular treaties, the claims of the three powers to be totally unfounded, and their proceedings to be contrary to all lawful rights. Little availed the remonstrances of justice against determined ambition, aided by resistless force. The confederate powers commanded the Polish king and republic to assemble without delay a diet to ratify their claims.

The king and senate applied to the courts of London, Versailles, Madrid, and the United Provinces, to interfere in their favour; but from the weakness, distance, or internal dissensions of these states, the applications were unavailing. Britain and France, indeed, remonstrated, but without effect. Deserted by the rest of mankind, and surrounded by powerful enemies, the Polish king and his council were necessitated to convoke a senate, in order to summon a diet for the purpose of formally authorizing usurpations which the force of the usurpers had before effectually confirmed. In the respective specifications of the partitioning powers, Austria was the most insolent, imperious, and full of threats; Catharine, the most moderate, plausible, and abounding in promises; and Frederick the most learned, acute, and replete with ingenious pretexts.‡ They now respectively prepared to take possession of their booty; and Frederick much more active than Austria, and less occupied than Russia, first secured his division, and added to the seizure part of Dantzic, including the harbour and port duties; and afterwards the remainder, though it constituted no part of his pretended claim upon Poland.

The influence of Frederick, however, was not confined to the scene of his power; for a revolution happened this year in Sweden, to which he greatly contributed. In early ages, the Swedes, like most other hardy and gallant inhabitants of the north, were free. From the time of Gustavus Vasa, there had been a fluctuation of constitutions, in which the aristocracy, or the king, were alternately paramount, and the people enjoyed very little share of power. Under Charles XII., the government was despotic: but his sister and heir, Ulrica, was obliged to suffer the aristocratical domination to be re-established; and Frederick and Adolphus were not able to triumph over the Swedish nobles. Adolphus dying in 1771, was succeeded by Gustavus, his eldest son by the sister of the Prussian king. Gustavus, on his accession to the throne, made the most ardent protestations of love for liberty; professed that he thought

* See state papers, 1772.

† Ibid.

‡ See the respective manifestoes; state papers, 1772.

[State of Denmark. Intrigues of the queen dowager.]

it the chief glory of a king to reign over a free people; subscribed the declaration of rights, and added articles for absolving his subjects from their allegiance if ever he should infringe the contract. At his coronation, he made a speech concluding with a prayer to God, *that ambition might not disturb the freedom and happiness of the state*. Notwithstanding his solemn oaths, however, this prince had concerted a project for becoming absolute. Aided by his two brothers, and trusty officers, he gained over the army to his interest; with the greatest art and success he courted popularity, while his emissaries no less actively rendered the people discontented with the senate and established government. He was assured of the support of his uncle; and indeed, both in the formation and execution of his plan, he displayed ability and vigour not unworthy of a nephew of Frederick. The scheme being ripe for execution, on the 19th of August Gustavus totally overturned the constitution, which less than three months before he had sworn to maintain, and engaged to support, as the indispensable condition of his admission to the regal office. Being master of all the military force at Stockholm, he surrounded the senate, and made the members prisoners. The diet was commanded to assemble; and, encompassed by fixed bayonets, the king ordered a new form of government to be read. The members, so situated, signed whatever was proposed, and took the oath which Gustavus himself dictated. He then drew a book of psalms from his pocket; and, taking off his crown, began to sing to the praise of God: the assembly joined this pious prince in his sacred music. He afterwards informed them, that he should in six years convene the assembly of the states.* Thus the year 1772 was an era of usurpation; by Gustavus in his own kingdom, and by his neighbours in the kingdom of another.

A change this year took place in Denmark, which, by affecting a British princess, strongly agitated, and deeply interested the loyal and generous hearts of Britons. Christian, king of Denmark, was the son of Frederick V., by Louisa, daughter of George II. The queen died in early youth, and king Frederick afterwards married a German princess, by whom he had a son named Frederick. This queen was a woman of great artifice and ambition. As her son was heir in default of his brother, the queen-dowager had been averse from the marriage of the young king. Christian was a prince of very weak understanding, and sunk by habits of debauchery below his natural insignificance. Matilda, though not sixteen years of age when she arrived in Denmark, immediately manifested to Julia Maria, the queen-dowager, an intelligence and sensibility, which, she did not doubt, must discern the incapacity, and feel the misconduct, of her husband. She therefore formed a project of sowing discord between the new married couple, which she trusted would end in a separation, and promote her views in favour of her son. For this purpose she played a double game; she employed her minions to ingratiate themselves with the king, and to encourage him in his vices; while she informed the queen of his defects, and professing a great friendship, declared that every thing in her power should be done for his reformation. Meanwhile, the silly monarch persisted in his usual course: the queen-dowager contrived to have a mistress thrown in his way, whom

* Mr. Charles Sheridan, British envoy at Sweden, published a very accurate account of this extraordinary revolution. Its heads are compressed above, in the text.

[Struensee. Accusation and arrest of Matilda.]

he kept openly in the palace. Matilda, possessing great sagacity, easily discovered both the designs and motives of the treacherous dowager. Anxious for the welfare of her infant prince, she, for the sake of the son, overlooked the folly of the father; and soon procured such influence, as to attain the chief direction of affairs, before possessed by the elder queen. The ambition of Julia was now stimulated by revenge, the gratification of which she at last accomplished. There was at the court of Copenhagen, a German named Struensee, of some abilities, with that widespread of superficial knowledge, and those petty attainments which are so common in continental adventurers. He possessed also an insinuating address, and an agreeable person; but was profligate in his manners, and abandoned in his principles. Having studied some branches of medicine, he professed himself a physician; and having attended the king when he was experiencing the effects of vice, he acquired great favour with the sovereign, and in a short time made so rapid a progress, that, from being an itinerant empiric, he became minister of state. He also elevated Brandt, a fellow adventurer, and several others of his friends. Both Struensee and Brandt were raised to beards; many of the chief grantees were disgraced; and most of them were disgusted with the upstart insolence of these ignoble favourites. The demeanour of Struensee also excited many and powerful enemies. As Matilda had then the superior power, Struensee joined her politics in opposition to those of the queen-dowager; and thus added to the number of his foes. Julia secretly insinuated that not a political connexion only subsisted between Struensee and the queen; and in 1771, when Matilda was delivered of a daughter, she, seeing the new-born princess, said with a malicious smile, that the child had all the features of Struensee. The evil report was industriously propagated; and it was farther asserted, that the ruling party had formed a design to supersede the king, to appoint Matilda regent during the minority of her son, and Struensee supreme director of affairs. The report of the intended deposition was never substantiated by any proof; and the other rumour, which was never seconded either by testimony or circumstantial evidence, must stand in history as a FALSE AND MALICIOUS SLANDER against the sister of the British sovereign. The queen, finding herself an object of unjust suspicion, took a part very natural to conscious innocence, but often injurious to female reputation: she disregarded the rumours, and did not abstain from the company of the suspected party. This conduct, neither prudent nor judicious, greatly accelerated the success of her enemies. It was not difficult to spread scandal against the friend of a man so deservedly unpopular; and the charge was very generally believed. The king was easily impressed with the prevailing opinion, being a mere tool in the hands of any party that happened to predominate.

On the 17th of January, the queen-dowager and her son, coming at four in the morning to the king's bed-chamber, asserted to him, that the queen and Struensee were at that very hour, framing an act of renunciation of the crown, which they would compel him immediately to sign; and therefore that his only means of escaping this danger, was to sign orders which they had drawn up for the arrest of the queen and her accomplices. The king, though reluctant, at length complied, and the orders were immediately executed; but the queen being found in her own apartment, and Struensee and Brandt in bed in their respective houses, manifested the falsehood of Julia's charge. Having before se-

[Interference of the king of England in her behalf.]

cured the army and people, the dowager reigned without control. Struensee and Brandt were tried; but, culpable as they both might be, there was no evidence that they had perpetrated any capital crime; they were, however, sentenced to death, and executed. Respecting queen Matilda, the ruling party did not attempt to establish their charges. The dowager was unwilling to establish a precedent for trying a queen by subjects; and besides, though by subordination and iniquity she might easily have crushed an unprotected individual however innocent, yet to put to an undeserved death the sister of the king of England, would be a very dangerous act of tyranny. His Britannic majesty, knowing that it would be in vain to attempt the vindication of his sister's character in a country governed by her inveterate enemies, resolved to rescue her from those malignant calumniators, and sent a SQUADRON to demand the unfortunate princess. The court of Denmark, not choosing to refuse a requisition so seconded, delivered her to commodore Macbride, who conveyed her from the scene of her persecution to Zell, a city in the dominions of Hanover, where her royal brother had provided her an asylum, in which she resided during the remainder of her short life.*

* She died May 10th, 1775, of a malignant fever, in her 24th year.

CHAPTER XI.

America, tranquil in the south, is turbulent in the north.—Massachusetts disavows the authorities of the British constitution.—Britain.—Mercantile failures of 1772.—Alexander Fordyce.—Change of mercantile character.—Influence of accumulation in India.—Stock-jobbing—fictitious credit—extravagant adventure without capital.—High estimation of lord North for financial skill.—Affairs of the India company—its pecuniary embarrassments—conduct of its servants, and distresses of the natives—reported to the house of commons by a committee.—The company propose a scheme for correcting and restraining its servants.—Parliament undertakes the task.—Company's petition for a loan—granted on certain conditions.—Company allowed to export tea from Britain duty free.—Lord North's plan for the government of India—discussed in parliament—passes into a law.—Inquiry into the conduct of lord Clive.—Distinguished abilities of Messrs. Thurlow and Wedderburne shown against and for lord Clive.—The war with the Caribbs.—Increase of half-pay to naval captains.—Petition of the dissenters—is rejected.—Supplies.—Reduction of the national debt.—Continental affairs.—Completion of the dismemberment of Poland.—Violent attacks of Roman catholic powers on their clergy.—America—tranquillity, and flourishing commerce.—Britain—discontent and licentiousness subside.—Increasing trade and prosperity imputed to the policy of lord North.—The minister now at the zenith of his fame.

TRANQUILLITY continued to prevail in the middle and southern colonies of America; but in the northern, the democratical spirit was daily gaining ground. The salaries of the provincial judges, and the attorney and solicitor-general, paid by the assemblies, were very scanty. To render men in such important situations more independent in their circumstances, government had this year assigned them liberal salaries out of the American revenue. The New-Englanders affected to believe that this arrangement was intended to corrupt the source of justice, and render decisions dependent on government. A meeting of Bostonians, called by themselves the *select men*, on the 25th of October petitioned government to hold an assembly for the purpose of considering the evil tendency of the new regulations. The governor not complying, the committee issued a new declaration of rights, more republican than any that had yet been published; which considered the provincials merely as free men, not as British subjects, and denied the right of the British parliament to legislate in any case for the colonies. A general meeting of Bostonians immediately adopted this declaration of their committee; the provincial assembly published their approbation of the doctrines in their most democratical extent: and the proceedings of all classes and orders in Massachusetts amounted to a disavowal of the established authorities of the British constitution. Republican turbulence in the north, and tranquil acquiescence in constitutional authority through the middle and southern colonies, strongly manifested a diversity of sentiment, which it was the duty of legislative wisdom to consider, in its policy towards the respective provinces.

In Britain, this year was remarkable for very great and numerous bankruptcies, important in themselves, but more momentous as they de-

[Change of the mercantile character. Influence of acquisitions in India.]

monstrated the close and complex connexions and intermingled dependencies of commercial credit, and also marked a change that had taken place in the mercantile character. A Scotch adventurer, named Alexander Fordyce, had risen in a few years to such a height in the city of London, that his downfall appeared for a time to shake all credit and confidence throughout the metropolis. Fordyce was a projector, who possessed ingenuity to form plausible schemes, insinuating manners, and dexterous address to engage confidence, but without sound judgment and prudence to direct his conduct. He had gambled in the funds to a very great amount; and having at times succeeded, by his occasional command of ready money, and by becoming a partner in a very eminent banking-house, he was intrusted with many and large sums belonging to others. He now dealt in stock-jobbing to an extent unknown in the annals of gambling. At length the bubble burst: he failed to an amount little short of half a million, and involved his partners in his ruin; and many others, who had trusted him with money or bills, shared the same fate. The fall of so great a house carried its effects far beyond immediate creditors, excited a distrust of other banking and mercantile firms, and obstructing the usual accommodation, produced many stoppages. But these evils occasioned in a considerable degree by Fordyce and his connexions, originated in causes much more general, which influenced the conduct and determined the fortune of many others. The gains of British merchants in former times were chiefly from the gradual operation of skill, industry, economy, and bold yet prudent adventure. The riches acquired were rarely amassed but by a long and persevering attention to trade; moderate wealth was the progressive effect of certain intellectual and moral qualities, skilfully and steadily exerted for a long course of years, forming and determining the character, while they filled the coffers. By the vast acquisitions in India, immense fortunes had been accumulated almost instantaneously: adventurers of very limited merit in three or four years had returned with ten times the wealth that able, prosperous, and eminent merchants were able to collect by the efforts of a long and industrious life. The view of such astonishing acquisitions dazzled many traders, and instead of submitting patiently to former modes of commercial process, they would become opulent by compendious means: with this intent, they engaged in hazardous adventures in the funds,* monopolies, and various other objects. Not having actual property for carrying on such extensive plans, they were obliged to proceed upon trust; and, as men of real wealth were not the most likely to risk their money on doubtful schemes, combinations of indigent adventurers were formed for maintaining a fictitious credit by interchange of bills. Some of these actually succeeded in acquiring a capital; others kept themselves so long afloat, as to impress the world with an opinion of their ultimate responsibility, and thus found means to involve wealthy men in their projects. From the eastern accumulations and manners, came also an enormous increase of luxury; this evil did not so readily affect the substantial merchant, who in making his fortune had formed his habits to frugality and moderation, as the visionary and needy pro-

* Though stock-jobbing had prevailed ever since the establishment of the national debt, the great fluctuation of India stock about this time afforded more scope than usual for this species of gambling.

[Extravagant adventure without capital. Affairs of the India company.]

jector, whose fancy anticipated immense profits, and whose actual possessions could not possibly suffer the smallest loss. The failures of this year were chiefly imputable to extravagant projects in trade, stock-jobbing, and enormous paper credit without capital mutually acting and reacting, severally and jointly the effects and causes of luxury and profusion. These disasters, springing from unwarrantable adventure, extended their consequences to men totally unconcerned in such wild and destructive schemes. Bankers, in particular, were a class of traders, who from the nature of their business, had many customers, among persons requiring much accommodation by discount, and some of these sustained very great losses. The bank, in a state of general distrust, having refused the usual discounts, men of considerable property were embarrassed, as they could not raise money to discharge engagements formed on the faith of customary accommodation, and for several months trade was stagnant. Although many of the commercial sufferers were distressed, not from want of property, but the stoppage of its usual convertibility, no measures were proposed by ministers for supporting the mercantile credit of persons, who, by temporary assistance, might have been preserved from ruin. Greatly, however, as these insolvencies obstructed trade at the time, they did not prove ultimately injurious; for, by inculcating caution and reserve, they rendered credit more discriminate, and discouraged the desperate schemes of gamblers, and other unprincipled or infatuated speculators. This beneficial effect, however, they owed to the natural course of commercial confidence, without any aid from the policy of administration.

Lord North had now acquired a stability and power, much greater than any of his predecessors since the resignation of Mr. Pitt. In the ministry there was none of that distraction of counsels, which contributed so much to the inefficiency of former administrations. The first lord of the treasury excelled most members in parliamentary eloquence, and he had already acquired great reputation for financial skill. From the return of tranquillity to the greater part of America, and the diminution of licentiousness at home, his political talents were generally respected. The opponents of government, though still paramount in genius and eloquence, were very much diminished in number, and less severe and vehement against a minister whom they could not help thinking well qualified for his office, and throughout the nation lord North was become the object of esteem and confidence.

The subject about to occupy chiefly the ensuing session of parliament was the affairs of India, in the investigation of which a committee of the house was employed during the summer. Though the concerns of the company had been brought under the cognizance of parliament so early as 1767, no measures of correction and regulation had been adopted, except to rescind their acts, restrict their dividends, and obtain from them an annual sum of money on stipulated conditions. Inquiry and investigation now afforded abundant proof, that a comprehensive and radical reform was indispensably necessary to the interests of the company, the honour of England, the welfare and even existence of the natives, and the salvation of British India.

An immense accession of territory had unavoidably compelled the company to repose very great trusts in their servants, and this confidence had been most grossly and flagrantly abused. The company's officers

[Its pecuniary embarrassments. Conduct of its servants.]

were guilty of complicated and extensive malversation; their ambition and extravagance had involved their employers in unnecessary and enormous expenses; and their extortion, speculation, and iniquity, made a considerable diminution in the income of their masters. To enter on a particular detail of the multifarious means which were employed by the company's servants for defrauding and plundering the natives of India, would far exceed our limits; but a short sketch of the character, system, and leading consequences of the speculation is a necessary part of our history, as a momentous fact belonging to our subject, marking the principle, spirit, and operation of British avarice in India, and ascertaining the necessity for a control to restrain and prevent such flagrant and destructive wickedness. It was before observed, that the plunder of India was conducted by our countrymen according to mercantile modes, and this remark our present account will farther illustrate. The chief servants of the company made it their first business to inform themselves of the most valuable and marketable commodities in the provinces which they were employed to govern, for the benefit of their masters; they found that salt, betel, and tobacco, were the most productive merchandizes; and, accordingly, they very deliberately formed what they called a commercial association for inland traffic in those articles. The principle of the co-partnership was very simple, being only that the said associators, namely the council of Calcutta, its friends and favourites, should have the sole power of buying and selling those commodities. Thus did servants, without any authority from their masters, who had indeed no right to grant such power, establish by their own will, and for their own benefit, a monopoly of the absolute necessities of life, throughout three large, populous, and opulent provinces. Having no competitors, they bought and sold at their own price: impoverishing the people, they rendered them unable to pay the stated exactions of the company; and thus in robbing the natives, they defrauded their own employers. Not satisfied, however, with commercial pillage, they turned their views also to territorial estates. The zemindars, or landed proprietors, held their possessions on leases, the validity of which had never been doubted, more than any other legal security for property. The company's servants, however, destroyed this right, deprived the proprietors of their lands, sold them to the highest bidders, and shared the profits among themselves, according to their respective rank and influence in this combination of rapine. The landholders, deprived of the secure expectation of reaping the fruit, neglected to cultivate the soil; a large proportion of land was left untilled, and the consequence was a scarcity of food. The oppressed Indians unable to procure rice, tried to subsist on roots; but many of these proving unwholesome, pestilence accompanied famine: the waters of the Ganges were infected by the number of carcases which they daily received, and the putrid effluvia increased the mortality. The insatiate avarice of Britons thus spread desolation over India: the same iniquity which beggared the people, impoverished the company; and vast sums were spent in lucrative jobs, of no use to the establishment. There was, indeed, among the company's servants, one predominant object,—to amass money by every means, however iniquitous and destructive; but the most efficacious expedients of avarice were, fraud and breach of trust to their employers, devastation of the possessions which they were hired to improve, and plunder of the natives whom they were

[Proceedings in parliament. Plan of lord North.]

paid to govern.* With such servants, the company, instead of becoming opulent, were deeply embarrassed; they had borrowed large sums of the bank, and requested the assistance of government to liquidate their debts. Such was the essence of the report prepared by the committee, and delivered to parliament, which met on the 26th of November. It farther appeared, that their distresses had been increased by accepting bills from their unprincipled servants, who thus procured the responsibility of their masters for engagements by which the servants only were benefited. The misconduct of the company's officers, with all its consequences, was manifestly imputable to the want of an efficient control, proportionate to the vast powers with which they were necessarily intrusted. In the present situation of affairs, therefore, it was the business of the legislature to establish a control, which, leaving to servants every power necessary for the objects of their employment, should only restrain malversation. The minister, admitting the abuses of the servants and the embarrassed state of the company's affairs, declared that the evils might be removed by wise and vigorous management. The company were themselves preparing to send out supervisors, to direct and reform their servants; but such efforts would, in his opinion, be inadequate to the exigencies of affairs. Before he himself introduced a plan of regulation, he proposed a secret committee, which should find out every thing necessary to be known, without exposing any facts of which the publication would be injurious. The committee reported, that the company, though much distressed in their pecuniary concerns, were preparing to send out a commission of supervision, the expense of which would heavily add to their difficulties; and recommended a bill to prevent them from pursuing their intention: a second report presented a statement of the effects, debts, and credits, of the company at home and abroad. On the reports of this secret committee, together with those of the select committee, lord North formed a plan respecting India, which consisted of three successive bills, and the discussion occupied the principal consideration of parliament in the present session. The first bill was framed to prevent the company from employing the intended means for the correction of abuses in India, and was preparatory to the interference of the British government in the administration of that country; the second proposed to relieve the company from its present embarrassments, by a loan; and the third to establish regulations for the better management of the affairs of the company, as well in India as in Europe. The first bill was opposed, as an invasion of the company's charter, and of the right which every British subject, or body of subjects, possesses, of managing their own affairs. The company's situation, it was contended, was not so distressed as to be irretrievable by its own efforts and counsels. In the progress of the bill, petitions and counsels from Indian proprietors maintained the same doctrine. Ministers and the other supporters of the bill declared, that they intended the good of the company, as well as the security of the public. The proposing a very expensive commission at a time when the company was already in arrears to government, and so distressed as to be applying for a loan, was a very impolitic measure; it was therefore the duty of parliament to prevent them

* This statement is compressed from the report of the select committee, delivered to the house in November 1772.

[The company obtains a loan from parliament.]

from being involved in utter ruin. Beside the unsuitableness of such an establishment to their circumstances, it was totally inadequate to the proposed object. The malversations in India were too great for any efforts of the court of directors to correct; the power of government only could be capable of curbing rapacity and violence, restoring to the inhabitants the secure enjoyment of their property, and directing the revenue into its proper channels. A great majority of both houses voted for the law.

During the progress of this business, the company petitioned parliament for a loan, in the manner and on the terms specified in several propositions which had been presented to the house. They asked for one million five hundred thousand pounds for four years, at four per cent. to be repaid by instalments; and engaged that the dividends of the company should not exceed six per cent. until half the sum was liquidated, after which they might raise their dividend to eight per cent. When the whole loan was discharged, the net profits beyond eight per cent. should be applied to the payment of the company's bond debt, until it was reduced to 1,500,000*l.* and after that reduction the surplus should be divided between the public and the company. They farther requested, that they might be discharged, during the remainder of the five years,* from the four hundred thousand pounds, and might have leave to export their teas, free of duty, to America and foreign countries. Lord North, admitting the policy of relieving them, proposed, that one million four hundred thousand pounds should be lent to the company, and that their dividends should be limited to six per cent. until the repayment of the loan, and afterwards to seven per cent. until their bond debt should be reduced to 1,500,000*l.* Respecting the participation of profits the minister proposed, that the surplus profits, above the sum of eight per cent. should pay three-fourths to the treasury, and the remainder be applied to the farther reduction of the bond debt, or to discharge future contingencies of the company. In the course of these discussions, the minister contended, that the state had a right to territorial possessions acquired through conquest by any of its subjects. Opposition argued, that lands acquired without the interference of the state, by a company exercising the corporate rights which they had purchased from the state, could no more belong to Great Britain, than the advantages of any other contract could belong to the grantor after he had made the convention for specified value. The minister persevered in asserting the right of the state to the territorial possessions in India, but thought it better to wave that question for six years longer, soon after which period the charter would expire. Those who either wished to oppose ministry, or to support the pretensions of the India company, chose to consider the state and company as two independent parties discussing a question of property according to the law of England. The minister took a different view: he looked on the East India company as a body, which had been incorporated for a certain purpose, but was now placed in a situation totally different from the intent of its charters, and as protected in its commercial possession by those charters; but that its territorial acquisitions constituted no part of the corporation's rights; and became a question of

* See the parliamentary transactions of 1769, in this volume, p. 247.

[Free exportation of tea. Inquiry into the conduct of lord Clive.]

policy, to be determined on the general principles of wisdom and prudence, and not of law, to be decided by courts or judicature.

In conformity to that part of the company's petition which respected the export of tea, the minister proposed, that they should be allowed to send it without paying customs wherever they could find a market. One cause of their diminished return was, the rejection of that commodity by the colonies: they had 17,000,000 lbs. on hand, which, by being enabled to sell at a reduced price, they hoped they could dispose of both in Europe and America. Lord North further intended, by thus offering the article to the Americans at a low price, to tempt them to purchase it in great quantities; and thus, besides benefiting the company, to add to the impost revenue from the colonies. This part of his plan led eventually to more important consequences, than any of his whole system for regulating the affairs of the India company.

The minister proceeded to propose a third bill for the better management of the company's affairs; containing the first plan framed in the British legislature for governing British India. The scheme was, that the court of directors should be elected for four years; six members annually, but no one to continue in the direction longer than the four years: that none should vote at the election of a director, who had not been a proprietor twelve months; that the qualification of a voter should, instead of five hundred pounds India stock, be a thousand; that the mayor's court of Calcutta should be confined to small mercantile cases: that a new court should be established, consisting of a chief justice and three puisne judges, who were to be appointed by the crown, and a superiority was to be given to the presidency of Bengal over the other establishments of India. In support of this bill ministers alleged that the present brief period of their continuance in office left the directors no leisure to form and execute projects of permanent advantage; that six months was too short a term for holding stock as a qualification to vote, as it did not preclude temporary purchases for that purpose; and that 500*l.* was not a sufficient interest in the company, to entitle a proprietor to a vote, in its present extensive concerns. The mayor's court, composed of merchants and traders, though competent to its juridical purpose before the territorial acquisitions, when the matters submitted to its decision were solely commercial, was now totally inadequate to the exercise of the supreme judicature, and therefore a new court was proposed. The minister did not profess to expect that these regulations would completely produce the desired effect; yet he trusted that they would operate powerfully towards a general reform, and that the future vigilance of the legislature, instructed by experience, would provide new regulations, suitable to the state of the various and complicated concerns. The bill was long and vigorously opposed in parliament, and strongly deprecated by India proprietors; not only by the holders under a thousand pounds stock, who asserted that the franchise which they had purchased was confiscated without delinquency; but by others, who apprehended that thereby the property of India stock would decrease in value, as so strong a motive to purchase, or retain was withdrawn: however, at length it passed into a law. The committee, beside collecting information to guide and induce deliberative amendment, found in the conduct of some of the company's principal servants, grounds for very severe judicial inquiries. A direct charge was adduced against those who had been prin-

[The house discontinues the inquiry. War with the Caribba.]

cipally concerned in the deposition of Surajah Dowla. General Burgoyne, chairman of the select committee, having enumerated the distresses of India, and the acts from which, according to the committee, they arose, declared that he would prosecute the chief delinquents; he therefore moved "that the right honourable Robert lord Clive, baron Plassey in the kingdom of Ireland, in consequence of the powers vested in him in India, had illegally acquired the sum of 234,000*l.* to the dishonour and detriment of the state."

The arguments to support this charge were taken from the result of the various inquiries, a great part of which consisted of answers to interrogatories, put to the accused himself, and other principal actors. Lord Clive was stated to be the oldest, if not the chief delinquent, and to have set an evil example to all the rest; unless he were punished, therefore, every other offender might equitably expect indemnity. Lord Clive made a very ingenious and dexterous defence: and with much art having avoided a close discussion of the question on its own ground of right or wrong, he pleaded the thanks of the directors and proprietors on his return home, and farther, the approbation of his sovereign and country. In certain situations, he said, there was a critical necessity, in which the English power and fortune in Asia depended solely on rapid, well timed, and extraordinary measures; by such efforts, he contended that he had saved India. The presents were agreeable to the general custom of the east; Meer Jaffer had rewarded all those who had been instrumental to his success; the acceptance of such recompense he had never deemed dishonourable, and, it was well known, he had never concealed. Other members of the house, beside enlarging on these topics, farther argued, that his high character and immense fortune, after having been quietly enjoyed for so many years, ought not to be endangered by a scrutiny into a remote period; and that, moreover, his important services ought to have screened him from those charges. This species of logic, that in a case of criminal inquiry, service performed at one time, may be pleaded as a *set-off* against guilt contracted at another, was strongly controverted by Mr. Thurlow, who conducted the attack, while Mr. Wedderburne headed the defence. A motion being made for censuring his conduct, the acuteness of his advocate did not rest the vindication of lord Clive on a plea of service, which he as fully as Mr. Thurlow admitted to be irrelative in a criminal charge, but his chief ground of argument was the nature of the evidence, which arose principally from the accused himself, and other leading actors. The testimonies were given by gentlemen who had no conception that their statements could affect themselves; and if rendered the foundation of a prosecution, they would oblige persons to be witnesses to their own detriment, than which nothing could be more inconsistent with justice, and the judicial course of England.* These arguments, strongly impressed by Mr. Wedderburne, induced the house by a considerable majority to put an end to the inquiry.

While East India affairs occupied the chief attention of parliament, some occurrences in the West Indies were also brought under its consideration. The islands of St. Vincent, St. Lucia, and Dominica, had formerly been deemed neutral, both by the French and the English. The proprietors of the soil were the Caribbs, being the descendants of

* Debrett's Parliamentary Debates, for May, 1773.

[Increase of half-pay to naval captains.]

the aboriginal Indians, with a small intermixture from fugitive negroes. The French had made establishments in these islands, with the consent of the natives; but had found it necessary, for the secure enjoyment and improvement of their new acquisitions, to court the friendship of the ancient possessors. At the cession of St. Vincent to England, the Caribbs were not mentioned; and when new settlers from Britain undertook to plant the island, orders were given, that while these Indians were inoffensive they should not be disturbed. Most of the French planters sold their estates to British adventurers, who became considerable both in numbers and property; but the most fertile tracts were still in the hands of the Indians. The new colonists, conceiving that such valuable possessions would be much better improved by British industry than by Indian indolence, proposed to government to deprive the natives of the soil fittest for cultivation, and bestow on them tracts more commodious for their favourite occupations of hunting and fishing; and administration, foreseeing no opposition from the natives, approved the plan. The exchange was offered by the planters to the Caribbs, but rejected with indignation: they had held their lands, they said, independent of the king of France, and would now hold them independent of the king of Great Britain. The British settlers, apprehensive of a contest with such inflexible neighbours, submitted to government, whether it was not expedient, since the Caribbs would not part with their lands, to transport them to the coast of Africa; and ministers too hastily agreed to the scheme. The Caribbs resolved to resist; and a body of troops, in 1772, was ordered from North America to reduce them to subjection; but the rainy season prevented our forces from making progress, and proved extremely sickly. These hostilities became the subject of severe animadversion in parliament; we had, it was said, unjustly attacked the immemorial rights of the Caribbs, and unwisely sent out our soldiers at a season fatal to Europeans who had newly arrived from a more temperate climate. Motions concerning the causes of the war and the state of the troops, caused long and ardent debates in parliament: which, though severally negatived by great majorities, highly excited the public attention. Intelligence at length arrived, that major-general Dalrymple and the Caribbs had concluded a peace, in which they acknowledged themselves the subjects of Great Britain, and promised, in their intercourse with the whites, to be governed by the laws of England; but in their own territories, and in matters relating to each other, they were to retain their ancient customs and usages: they agreed to cede certain districts to the British planters, and acknowledging that they owed their lands to the king's clemency, were allowed to retain all that was necessary for their population and pursuits.

In this session, lord Howe presented a petition from the captains of the navy, praying a small increase of their half-pay. From the reign of Elizabeth till the year 1715, as his lordship showed, naval captains received a half-pay double the amount of that which they received in 1773, when the value of money was so much diminished. It would be superfluous to employ argumentation in demonstrating the merit and importance of that gallant class of gentlemen, or to prove that the allowance was unsuitable to their rank in society. From the general attachment of Britons to the navy, and their conviction that the recompense was inadequate to the service, the public earnestly desired that the wish of

[Dissenters. National debt. Poland. Russian campaign.]

the brave veterans should be accomplished. The minister, admitting their claims, lamented that the situation of the finances did not allow additional expenses. The application, however, was so very popular, that a motion was carried in favour of the petition, a suitable address presented to his majesty, and an addition of two shillings a day (amounting in all to six) made to the half-pay of navy captains.

The dissenters, notwithstanding the disappointment of the former year, brought in a bill for the repeal of penal laws and subscriptions, which, being supported and opposed by the same arguments as before, was rejected.

The ways and means of this session showed the financial skill of the minister to be neither excellent nor defective. His calculation, indeed, on the reduction of the national debt, had proved somewhat erroneous, as no part of the funded incumbrance was actually liquidated. Exchequer bills to the amount of 1,800,000*l.* were discharged: and the money advanced to the East India company was not immediately raised, but credit pledged for it in exchequer bills. The session did not rise till July 1st, after having lasted nearly eight months.

During this winter there was a great scarcity of corn, especially in Scotland, and tumults ensued; the rioters, however, by the vigilance of the corn dealers, and the firmness of the magistrates, were prevented from destructive outrage. On the continent of Europe, the partitioning powers this year continued to be the principal objects of observation, while they completed their project of robbery, and compelled the unhappy Poles to sanction their various steps of iniquity and usurpation. As they advanced in spoliation, they grew more indifferent about even the semblance of justice; and whenever the Poles offered any remonstrance, they immediately threatened to overwhelm them with troops.* A few of the nobility having escaped from Warsaw, betook themselves to Cracow, and there endeavoured to form a party against the plunderers and usurpers; but their attempts were unavailing; the partitioning powers, having dismembered the best provinces of Poland under pretence of amending its constitution, confirmed its defects and perpetuated the principles of anarchy and confusion. It would be foreign to this history to follow those dragooning lawgivers through the detail of their acts, but they all showed that the object was to render those parts dependent on the partitioning powers through faction and internal disorder, which it did not at present suit their purpose to seize by their arms.

Russia was by no means so successful against the Turks this year, as in former campaigns. Elated with her victories, she had refused all reasonable terms of accommodation, expecting that her conquering forces would penetrate to Constantinople, and that she might dictate the peace in the enemy's capital. Early in summer, her forces on the Danube took the field, and after some partial and detached advantages, the

* See the manifestoes of the three several powers, addressed to Poland; state papers, 1773.

† It may be asked, why did not the confederate invaders usurp the whole kingdom of Poland? Of the reasons of this forbearance, the Annual Register gives a very probable account. "It would have been a matter of no difficulty to form new claims upon as good a foundation as those which they had already made; but it would not have been so easy to have agreed among themselves as to the distribution." Annual Register, 1773, p. 40.

[Views of France. Reduction of ecclesiastical power.]

grand army penetrating to the confines of Romania, found the vizier so strongly posted, that he could prevent the progress of the Russians without being compelled to hazard a battle. After various masterly but ineffectual movements to bring the enemy to a decisive engagement, Romanzow was obliged to recross the Danube, and at the end of the campaign found himself no farther advanced than at the beginning. In the Crimea and the Levant, the Russian operations, much less important, were equally indecisive: the Turks, indeed, being now retaught the use of arms, commanded by an able and skilful general who possessed the confidence of his soldiers, no longer afforded certain and easy victory.

It was conceived, that France and Spain were this year preparing to take a part in the war against Russia, of whose progress and power the house of Bourbon was jealous. Their armaments not being confined to the ports on the Mediterranean, and being greater than was necessary to act against the Russians in the Levant and Archipelago, the Baltic was supposed to be one object of their destination. France was believed to be, through her intimate connexion with the king of Sweden, instigating that prince to a war, which from his lately acquired absolute power, he could the more readily undertake. The equipments of the Bourbon sovereigns, whatever might be their purpose, necessarily aroused the vigilance of England; a powerful fleet was speedily prepared; and the ambassadors of Britain at their respective courts announced, that if they interfered in the war between Russia and Turkey, an English fleet sailing to the Mediterranean would frustrate their projects. The king of Spain, always inimical to this country, appeared disposed to hostilities; but the French king and ministry, desirous as they might be to check the progress of Russia, were far from wishing to involve themselves in a war with Britain, and by their influence at Madrid they prevented a rupture. In Italy, the pope, who had so strenuously maintained the cause of the Jesuits, and so obstinately endeavoured to support the customary extortion of his priests, was now dead. His successor, aware that a bishop of Rome was of little consequence out of his own diocese, unless supported by the power of lay sovereigns, determined to cultivate the friendship of those princes. To gratify the united house of Bourbon, he suppressed the Jesuits; but allowed individuals who had belonged to that order, to remain in his dominions, provided they rendered themselves useful, without advancing doctrines in support of their late institution, or taking any steps towards its restoration; and this was the final blow to the remains of an order the most celebrated of monkish fraternities. In all the Roman catholic states, the reduction of ecclesiastical power, begun with such effect by the house of Bourbon, was become general; indeed, plans of this sort were so hastily adopted and executed, as rather to manifest that they sprung from imitation than from rational conviction. The exaltation of priests far beyond their due rank in society, had been very long the fashion, so their excessive depression became now the mode of catholic courts; and undue contempt of ecclesiastics was a favourite sentiment with princes and ministers in those countries wherein they had very recently been regarded with undeserved admiration: those notions very naturally, in the usual course of human opinion, running into opposite extremes, accelerated the progress of infidelity; and in their remote consequences, precipitated the downfall of their abettors.

[Prosperous state of affairs at home and abroad.]

Though the stubborn republicans of New-England continued to thwart the mother country, the middle and southern provinces were peaceable and quietly advancing in population and prosperity. They seemed resolved to cultivate the friendship of Britain, replete with benefit, and which for several years no measure or occurrence had tended to intercept. They appeared well satisfied with the administration of lord North, under which the chief objects of their complaints had been redressed. Relieved from the greater part of the obnoxious imposts, they gave themselves little trouble about the reservation of the principal; and while their purses were spared, forebore quarrelling about metaphysical propositions; they also discouraged the republican agents of their northern neighbours. Bred in monarchical principles, they did not, like the Bostonians, wish to separate from Great Britain merely because it was a monarchy; they were willing to give allegiance for protection, though afforded by the wearer of a crown.

At home, the spirit of licentiousness had subsided; the minister, unassuming and agreeable in his manners, and candid in his opinions, was esteemed able and successful in his administration. His plan for governing India greatly increased his own power and patronage, and was yet pleasing to the country. It was necessary to restrain by some means the oppression, extortion, and cruelty of the company's servants; and the nation conceived the principles and provisions of his system to be effectual for that purpose. His new arrangements would, it was supposed, by preventing the extravagance and depredations of the company's officers, increase this bountiful source of revenue, and farther diminish the public burthens. The nation was at peace with all the world, and apparently likely to continue long to enjoy tranquillity; commerce was increasing, and conceived to be in a train of very great augmentation; and every thing appeared favourable to private and public prosperity. Thus during lord North's ministry, his country, from being a scene of turbulence and discontent, was become tranquil and satisfied; America, from refusing our manufactures, distressing our commerce, and being almost in rebellion against our government and laws, now afforded an advantageous market for our commodities, enriched our merchants and manufacturers, employed our shipping, exercised our sailors, and declared their attachment to our constitution and king. India, from being the scene of iniquity, was to be administered with justice. Our receipts, recently unequal to our annual expenditure, now, without farther burthening the subject, enabled us to reduce the national debt, and thus ultimately to lessen the taxes on the people. Such was the situation and reputation of the minister, and such the opinion and hopes of the people, at the period which the history has now reached; lord North being now in the meridian splendour of his administration.

Though the fairness of the prospect was no doubt exaggerated by sanguine imaginations, yet to discerning judgment it was by no means displeasing; tranquillity was restored at home, and in most of the colonies; some progress was making in reducing the national debt; trade was actually increasing, and likely still farther to advance. The effect of the East Indian plan, either commercial or political, could not with any precision be ascertained; but by restraining, in some degree, fraudulent and predatory appropriation of Indian wealth, seemed calculated to improve the company's finances, and the revenue of Britain. Reflecting politi-

[Imputed to the policy of lord North.]

cians saw, that the favourable change in our affairs could not be all traced to the minister's counsels or measures, but they certainly perceived that American tranquillity was to be imputed to his propositions. In these they discovered a mind more inclined to conciliation than coercion, and confidently inferred that lord North would adhere to the soothing policy, of which they had already experienced the salutary effects. No event or situation had occurred, to exhibit lord North as a great minister; but there were hitherto no grounds to question his capacity for successfully conducting the affairs of his country, in circumstances not more trying than those which he had yet encountered.

CHAP. XII.

Object of the minister in his proposition respecting the export of tea.—Alarm at Boston.—Discovery of the governor's letters to the English ministry.—News arrives in Boston, that ships laden with tea are on their way.—Riots—Governor's proclamation is disregarded.—Ships arrive at Boston.—A mob throws the cargo into the sea.—Meeting of parliament.—King's message respecting the disturbances at Boston is discussed in parliament.—Bill for blocking up the port of Boston.—The punishment of a whole community for the acts of a part, is defended by ministers.—The principle and provisions of the bill are impugned by opposition as unjust and unwise.—Precedents discussed.—Opposition predict, that it will drive the colonies to confederate revolt.—The bill passes into a law.—Mr. Fuller's motion for repealing the duty on tea.—Mr. Burke's celebrated speech on American taxation.—Coercive plan of ministers farther developed.—Bill for changing the civil government of Massachusetts.—Bill for changing the administration of justice therein.—Quebec bill.—Inquiry into the state of prisons.—Howard.—Supplies.—Literary property ascertained by a decision of the house of peers.—Session closes.—Expectations and apprehensions from the coercive measures of the legislature.

I COME now to a part of the narrative more important than any which has hitherto been the subject of this history. I have to trace the causes and the commencement of a war, which in its progress involved maritime Europe, and in its operations displayed very frequently all the strength of the British character, in which, though the issue proved unfortunate, as the counsels were not rarely unwise, and the executive conduct not seldom dilatory and indecisive, yet the contest was on the whole not inglorious. The mass of British energy was unimpaired. Military ardour and enterprise, naval skill, courage, and ability, manifested themselves in all ranks. If Britain, having the whole force of her ancient foes and her recent friends and subjects to combat, did not come off victorious, yet she was not vanquished; she indeed lost her colonies, but did not lose her honour.

Various were the circumstances, both internal and external, in her cabinet, her senate, her camp, and the combined efforts of her enemies, which tended to depress our country: but all did not effect a lasting humiliation. The national exertions, though far different in success from those during which Pitt had guided her counsels, or Marlborough headed her troops, proved that Britain had not degenerated. Severely as the effects of the American war were immediately felt by this country, yet its distant consequences have been most dreadful to continental Europe, by rapidly accelerating that great revolution which now overwhelms so large a portion of the civilized world, and has made the chief abettors of revolt fall into destruction from the principles which that revolt cherished.

Lord North, in his proposition for exporting the teas of the company without paying duty, had a two-fold object in view: to relieve the company, and to improve the revenue. The Americans, being informed of the act, viewed it only in the latter light. The associations against importing tea, were still in existence; although, except in

[Alarm at Boston. Discovery of the Hutchinson letters.]

Massachusetts Bay, little regarded; and the promulgation of this scheme revived their spirit in the more moderate colonies, but in Massachusetts it excited great rage and alarm. It was foreseen, that if the tea were once introduced and landed, it would be impossible to prevent its sale and consumption, and thus the inhabitants would be obliged to pay the duty, notwithstanding all their efforts to oppose taxation. As tea had been clandestinely imported even to Boston, the dealers, who were very numerous, were afraid that the trade might be taken out of their hands, and become entirely dependent on the consignees of the East India company. These, from the connexion now subsisting between the company and the administration, were gentlemen who favoured government, and were of course unpopular in New-England.

There was another circumstance also, which rendered these colonists more inimical than ever to government, and consequently more determined to oppose its measures and misconstrue its intentions. Some years before this time, the governor and deputy governor of Massachusetts had written confidential letters to official persons in England, containing a very unfavourable view of the state of affairs, and of the temper, dispositions, and designs of the leaders in that province. They alleged, that a republican spirit prevailed there, which would resist the measures of Britain, however equitable; that to reduce the inhabitants to obedience, coercion was necessary; and that a considerable change of the constitution and system of government was requisite, to ensure the subordination of the colony; and proposed, that the alteration should be such as would abridge their liberties. By some means not yet discovered, Doctor Franklin, agent for the province in England, got the letters into his possession. Franklin was also deputy post-master-general for America, an office which he held from the appointment of the British government; from gratitude, therefore, he might have been presumed to be attached to his employers. Perhaps the possessor of the letters might, on this supposition, have shown them to him, in order to illustrate some opinion respecting the conduct of the Americans; but howsoever he might have discovered them, it was to be expected that he, who must have seen their nature and tendency, would not have published papers which must necessarily embroil the governor and the colonies. Franklin, nevertheless, did make them known, by transmitting them to the provincial assembly then sitting at Boston. The animosity and indignation excited by their perusal were, as the informer must have foreseen, very violent. The assembly sent a deputation to inquire whether the governor acknowledged the signatures; and the subscription being owned, they prepared a petition and remonstrance to be presented to the king, charging the governor with betraying his trust by giving partial and false information, declaring him an enemy to the colony, and praying for his removal from office. This new source of discord rendered the Bostonians more open to other causes. The consignees of the East India company were chiefly of the family and nearest connexions of the governor and deputy governor, and were thus more obnoxious to the hatred of the Bostonians.

In the month of November, intelligence was received that three ships laden with tea were on their passage to Boston. Tumults, violence, and riot, were excited, to frighten the consignees from acting

[Arrival of the tea-ships, and discharge of their cargoes into the sea. Parliament.]

in their intended capacity. Some of the company's agents were so intimidated as to yield to this lawless violence, and to relinquish their appointments, but others resolved to discharge their duty. Committees were appointed in different towns, to which the constituents delegated much greater powers than justly and legally they possessed themselves. They authorized the deputies to inspect the books of merchants, to impose tests, and to inflict punishment on those who resisted their tyrannical proceedings. These violent measures were not confined to the province of Massachusetts, but extended to the other colonies; it was, however, at Boston that they proceeded to flagrant outrage. There the populace, with the imperious insolence of a democratical mob, commanded the agents to relinquish their appointments; but those gentlemen refused to deviate from engagements which justice sanctioned, and law authorized; and the rioters attacked the houses of the refractory consignees, whom they obliged to take refuge in Castle William. The governor issued a proclamation, commanding the civil magistrates to suppress the riots, and protect the peaceable and well disposed inhabitants;* but the proclamation was disregarded and despised, and the sheriff insulted for attempting to read it at one of the illegal meetings. In December, 1773, three ships belonging to the company arrived at Boston; and the very day on which they came to port, one of the first objects that they beheld was a custom-house officer tarred and feathered by a riotous multitude, because he had performed the duties of his office. The populace manifested so general a spirit of enmity and revenge against all whom they supposed to be connected with the importation of tea, that the captains were afraid to attempt the landing of their cargoes, and offered to return to England, if they could obtain the proper discharges from the consignees, the custom-house, and the governor: but though these officers would not venture to land the tea, they refused to give the captains a discharge while their cargoes remained on board, for the delivery of which they were engaged by the company. A meeting of the inhabitants had expressed a determination to send the cargoes and ships back to England, and applied to the custom-house for a clearance, and to the governor for leave for the ships to pass Castle William; and the refusal of both being reported, the Americans apprehended that it was the design of the government of officers to land the tea privately, which would render it impossible to prevent its gradual sale, and consequently the taxation, which the Bostonians abhorred. To oppose this, a number of armed men, in the evening of the 18th of December, disguised as Indians, boarded the ships, and threw the cargoes into the sea.

Before the news of this outrage arrived in England, parliament had assembled. That august body met on the 13th of January, 1774. The principal subjects of the king's speech were, the pacific disposition of other foreign powers, though the war between Russia and Turkey still continued; a general recommendation to employ our tranquillity from abroad in improving our condition at home, and especially to prosecute such measures as should tend to advance our commerce and revenue. Under these heads he recommended them to pay particular attention to the gold coin, which was then very much impaired.

* Stedman's History of the American War, vol. i. p. 84.

[Message of the king respecting the disturbances in Boston.]

On the disputes of America his majesty did not enter, as no information had yet been received of the violent proceedings of the colonists during the recess of parliament. In February, however, intelligence arrived of the riot in Boston; and on the 7th of March, a message was delivered from his majesty to the house of commons by lord North, purporting, that in consequence of the unwarrantable practices carried on in America, and particularly the outrageous proceedings at the town and port of Boston, with a view of obstructing the commerce of this kingdom, and upon grounds and pretences immediately subversive of the constitution, it was thought fit to lay the whole matter before parliament. The king confided as well in their zeal for the maintenance of his majesty's authority, as in their attachment to the general interest and welfare of all his dominions. He trusted that they would not only enable him effectually to adopt such measures as might be most likely to put an immediate stop to these disorders, but would also take into their most serious consideration what farther regulations and permanent provisions might be necessary to be established for better securing the execution of the laws, and the just dependence of the colonies upon the crown and parliament of Great Britain. This message being delivered, a great number of papers were laid before the house, consisting of copies and extracts of letters from the different magistrates and officers, the votes and resolutions of the inhabitants of Boston, and many other documents both authentic and important. An address to his majesty was proposed, strongly expressing the readiness of parliament to comply with the requisition of the royal message. Though this motion was carried without a division, it produced a very general discussion of American affairs, and of the mode and extent of the inquiries which should be made. Members of opposition admitted, that America was in a very disordered state; but contended, that the disturbances arose from one radical cause, taxation; and until that was removed, discontent would always continue in the colonies. They ought to inquire into the conduct of the Americans who had resisted government, and punish them according to the guilt established by proof. They ought also to examine the system of violence which had provoked, and of weakness which had encouraged, their resistance. The house could only support ministers, after investigating their conduct, and finding it wise and equitable; therefore a strict retrospect into their management was essentially connected with an inquiry concerning the state of America. If they had acted prudently, such a review would terminate to their honour; but if unwisely, it behoved parliament not to encourage weakness and ignorance. The retrospect here proposed was not for a judicial purpose, to have ministers tried or punished; but a deliberative, to direct the conduct of the legislature. Ministers warmly opposed this two-fold consideration of the subject; and contended, that the inquiry should be confined to the mere misbehaviour of the Bostonians. Were it to extend to other subjects, it would retard a business peculiarly pressing; and also encourage the disaffected colonists, by inducing them to suppose that there was in the British parliament a disposition to lessen their guilt by throwing blame on the executive government. The proposed retrospect was therefore not only unnecessary, but even dangerous: although ministers did not here prove that, in examining subjects of deliberative measures, it

[Bill for blocking up the port of Boston. Arguments of lord North.]

was better to rest contented with part of the facts than to scrutinize the whole (and that was the amount of their argument,*) yet they succeeded in persuading parliament to confine its attention to the violence and outrages of the Americans, without seeking to trace the causes. On this imperfect knowledge of facts, the British legislators proceeded to deliberate on questions involving the preservation or loss of a most valuable part of the empire. As the grounds of their procedure were partial, it might have been expected that they would have investigated the parts which they professed to consider, before they passed any laws upon them: it will be presently seen, in what manner, and to what extent, cognizance of the case preceded delivery of judgment. Parliament agreeing to inquire on the partial system proposed by government, ministers contended, that two subjects must be obtained,—satisfaction to the East India company for the loss which they had incurred by the destruction of the tea; and reparation to the honour of Britain for the insult which was offered to it in the forcible transgression of its laws. They vindicated the conduct of the governor, in not having employed the military force of the castle and ships of war to prevent the destruction of the cargoes: the leading men in Boston had, they alleged, always remonstrated against the interposition of the army and navy, and had imputed the past disturbances to their interference. Mr. Hutchinson manifested great prudence and discretion in forbearing an employment of his force, which would have been irritating to the minds of the people; and might well have hoped, that by thus confiding in their conduct, and trusting to the civil power, he should have quieted their tumultuous violence, and preserved the public peace. The event, however, proved contrary to his well-grounded expectations; the disposition and temper of the Bostonians, freed from the influence of fear, had been fairly tried, and had fully manifested themselves; and their conduct had demonstrated, that it was impossible for the powers now vested in government to prevent atrocious outrages. Our commerce, it was now evident, could no longer be safe in the harbour of Boston; and it was absolutely necessary, that some other port should be found for receiving our merchandise. The minister therefore proposed, for the purpose of private indemnification and public satisfaction, a bill for shutting up the port of Boston, and prohibiting the lading or unlading of all goods or merchandise (except stores for his majesty's service, and provisions and fuel for the use of the inhabitants,) at any place within its precincts, from and after the 1st of June, until it should appear to his majesty, that peace and obedience to the laws were so far restored in the town of Boston, that trade might again be safely carried on, and his majesty's customs be duly collected. In that case, his majesty might, by proclamation, open the harbour; but not even then, until it should appear that satisfaction had been made to the East India company for the destruction of their tea, and also to those who had suffered by the riots at the time of its arrival at Boston.†

Lord North observed, during the progress of the bill, that to fine communities for their neglect in not punishing offences committed

* See parliamentary debates, March, 1774; and afterwards on the Boston port bill.

† Stedman's History of the American War, vol. i. p. 88.

[Reasoning on the injustice and inexpediency of the bill.]

within their limits, was justified by several precedents. In king Charles the second's time, when Dr. Lamb was killed by unknown persons, the city of London was fined; when captain Porteus was violently and illegally put to death by a mob, the city of Edinburgh was fined and otherwise punished; and when Mr. Campbell's house at Glasgow was pulled down, part of the revenue of the town was sequestered to make good the damage. Boston, he observed, was much more criminal than either of the three cities that he had mentioned; that town had been upwards of seven years in riot and confusion; and there all the disturbances in America had originated. By this bill, Boston might certainly suffer; but she deserved to suffer, and she would suffer far less punishment than her delinquencies merited: the duration of her punishment was entirely in her own power; whenever she should make satisfaction for her past injuries, and give full assurance of her future obedience, his majesty would doubtless restore her to her former situation, and open her port. The present was a crisis which demanded vigour; for it was necessary to convince America, that Britain would not suffer her laws, her government, and the rights of her subjects to be violated with impunity. It might be alleged (ministers said) that the plan was wise and just, but that the execution would be difficult; to this they replied, that though the friends of British authority in America might suffer a little from their adherence to the cause, which was unpopular among the infatuated Bostonians, and our merchants might experience some diminution of trade from the determination of malcontents to refuse British commodities, and from the exclusion of commerce from this port, the inconvenience of either would be temporary and short. The present and proposed measures would either induce or compel those deluded men to return to their duty. No military force would be requisite to carry them into execution, for four or five frigates would be sufficient to effectuate our double purpose; but even if military force were wanted, it could act effectually without bloodshed. The other colonies, it was expected, would approve of the proper punishment being inflicted on those who had disobeyed the laws: but, even were they to combine with the rioters of Massachusetts Bay, the consequences of this rebellion would rest not with us, but with themselves: we were only answerable that our measures should be just and equitable.

During the progress of the bill, petitions were presented, deprecating its acceptance, upon a very plain principle of jurisprudence, *that no man or men can justly be condemned without being heard*; that the charges against the Bostonians were adduced on the report of the governor, who was notoriously at variance with that town and the whole province; that the proposed measure proceeded from the accusation of an enemy, on which partial ground it contained a sentence delivered, without hearing the accused party: the outrages committed were not within the jurisdiction of the city of Boston; for the harbour was under the command of the executive power; and the governor, not the city of Boston, was answerable for a neglect of authority there. In the alleged precedents of London and Edinburgh, the cases were totally dissimilar; the offences had been committed within the jurisdiction of those cities, and no judgment had been passed, until the cause was fully

[Opposition predict that it will drive the colonies to rebellion. Passed into a law.]

canvassed, after hearing both parties.* This was the purport of the petitions, one of which, from natives and inhabitants of North America, was heard, but not regarded; another, presented by the agent of Massachusetts Bay, for the inhabitants of Boston, was not received. The bill was opposed in the house, on the two grounds of justice and expediency. The arguments on the first head were nearly the same as those which were employed by the petitioners, that the whole city of Boston was punished for an offence not committed within its jurisdiction, and without being heard in its own vindication; it was besides alleged, that even if the culpability had been admitted, the punishment far exceeded the crime. Corporations, for neglecting to suppress tumults within their jurisdiction, had been frequently fined, but never deprived of the means of industry and trade. The restoration of their port being rendered dependent upon the king, became in fact dependent upon the king's ministers; and thus the Bostonians were placed, without a trial, in a situation in which they must incur commercial ruin, or comply with ministerial mandates. Besides, intelligence had arrived, that tea had been destroyed in most of the other colonies as well as Massachusetts; why then make an act of parliament for punishing a part, until they had examined the conduct of the whole? It was contrary to justice, and the constitutional rights of British subjects, to be taxed without their own consent; and all the disaffection and resistance had arisen from taxation, combined with the weak

* The following statement, drawn up from the petitions, and from the reasonings of members inimical to the Boston port bill, and published in the periodical works of the times, shows the absolute inapplicability of Porteus's noted case to the riot at Boston.

PROCEEDINGS AGAINST

EDINBURGH,

Began the 10th of February, 1737, and ended June 21st, having continued four months.

The provost and magistrates of Edinburgh, the judges of Scotland, and many other witnesses examined at the bar of the house.

Counsel and evidence for the magistrates and city fully heard at the bar.

Two members for Edinburgh, forty-five for Scotland, in the lower house; and sixteen in the upper.

Charge—*an overt act of rebellion, and an atrocious murder; proved on a full hearing, and by competent evidences.*

Frequent conferences held between the two houses, to compare the evidence, &c.

Punishment—*a fine of 2000*l*.*

Proof—*journals of the lords and commons in 1737, against Edinburgh and the bill.*

Boston.

Began the 14th, and ended the 31st of March, 1774, being in all seventeen days.

Witnesses examined by the privy council, and their evidence suppressed.

The agent refused a hearing at the bar.

Not one member for Boston in either house, nor for all or any part of America, nor even a voice in electing one.

Charge—*a riot and trespasses; no evidence, and no hearing.*

Not one conference.

Punishment—*the loss of their port, to the injury of the town, at the lowest rate, 500,000*l*. The restoration of their port, and the use of their property left at the king's mercy; after they shall have paid for rotten tea the price of sound, to the amount of 30,000*l*.*

Proof—*journals of the lords and commons, 1774, and the Boston port bill.*

[Impartial considerations. General Gage sails for Boston.]

and wavering systems of ministry. Administration, aware of the real cause, eagerly stifled inquiry, and called upon legislature to act upon their assertions and those of their agents. The law was inexpedient in a commercial view, as our trade must suffer, and that not by preclusion from Boston only; for other colonies were equally inimical to the tea duty as Massachusetts, and had discontinued, or at least diminished, their trade with Britain. It was politically hurtful; as it would irritate and tempt the colonies to resist, instead of intimidating them to submit; in short, it was the offspring of narrow understanding, incapable of comprehending the series of consequences which would, and must result from such a law. In various opinions and sentiments the colonies were divided, but on the subject of taxation they were unanimous. Thus ministers and their supporters were taking the very means to drive to a confederacy, provinces, some of which might have been kept separately, and in the interests of the mother country; and the combination would necessarily produce a forcible resistance to Britain, which, whatever should be its ultimate issue, must be pernicious to the contending parties. These reasons, however forcible they were, had no influence with the majority of the parliament; the bill was carried through both houses, and passed into a law, after a discussion of seventeen days.

The historian who impartially considers this momentous law, with all the circumstances from which directly or indirectly it arose, will allow, that the proceedings of Massachusetts Bay had for a series of years been dictated by principles wholly inconsistent with the constitutional authority of the British government over its subjects; that in opposing taxation, they had manifested a democratical spirit, not only in declarations and writings, but by acts of atrocious outrage; that it was very natural for ministers to be incensed against the avowers of such doctrines, and the perpetrators of such deeds: but he will also observe on the other hand, that the fluctuation of mildness and harshness, coercion and indulgence, (the conciliatory measures being proposed only after rigorous experiments had been found ineffectual,) enraged the colonists against the mother country for her apprehended intentions, without leading them to fear her power. In the measures which were adopted in consequence of the riot in Boston, the historian must discover a violence and precipitancy which more obviously displayed the impulse of anger, than discriminating justice, cautiously examining every circumstance, or expanded wisdom viewing causes, operations, and their consequences. The impartial reader must see, that an act of the British parliament, most important in its judicial operation, but infinitely more momentous in its political efforts, was passed when the legislative assembly was influenced by passion.

The Boston port bill being passed, a fleet of four ships of war was ordered to sail for Boston; and as a military force was thought necessary to reduce the inhabitants to obedience, general Gage, commander in chief in America, was appointed governor of Massachusetts Bay, in the room of Mr. Hutchinson, who had asked leave to return to England. For the execution of the act, powers were granted to Gage, by commission under the great seal, to bestow pardons for treason and all other crimes, and to remit fines and forfeitures to offenders whom he should think proper objects of mercy.

[Burke's celebrated speech on American taxation.]

Soon after the enactment of this law, Mr. Rose Fuller made a motion for repealing the duty on tea, the only remaining part of Mr. Charles Townshend's plan of 1767, so obnoxious to America. While parliament, he said, punished the outrages of the licentious and riotous, it was wise to gratify the well affected colonists. The greater number even of those who were most attached to the mother country was inimical to taxation; the duty was itself trifling, and its abandonment would be a very small sacrifice, were it either to preserve or restore tranquillity to the provinces. The arguments of most speakers on this subject were nearly the same as had been employed in former discussions. Mr. Edmund Burke, however, delivered a speech on American taxation, which renders this motion an epoch in the history of philosophical and political eloquence. His ground of argument was **EXPEDIENCE PROVED FROM EXPERIENCE.** He traced the history of the American colonies, and the policy of this country, from their first settlement to the commencement of the present reign, demonstrating the advantages of the former policy. The measures of the king's ministers were, he said, a deviation from that system; a deviation unjust both to Britain and her colonies. Having pursued their history from the beginning to the time at which he spoke, he divided it into periods, described and characterized each period, and the principal actors by whom they were respectively influenced, with the effects on the welfare of both the colonies and the parent state; he deduced from the whole the following recommendation: "Leave the Americans as they anciently stood; they and we, and their and our ancestors, have been happy under that system. *Oppose the ancient policy and practice of the empire, as a rampart against the speculations of innovations*, and they will stand on a manly and sure ground." In a few lines he marked the prominent features of ministerial policy, with the utmost accuracy of historical truth. "Never have the servants of the state looked at the whole of your complicated interests in one connected view: they have taken things by bits and scraps, just as they pressed, without regard to their relations and dependencies: they never had any system, right or wrong, but only occasionally invented some miserable tale of the day, in order meanly to sneak out of difficulties into which they had proudly strutted." Ministers opposed the motion, because a repeal at such a time would show fluctuation and inconsistency, which would defeat the good effects of the vigorous plan that, after too long remissness, was at last adopted. The motion was negatived. The disposition to carry things to extremities with America was become very general. As the repeal of the stamp act was much condemned, and its authors greatly decried by the ministerial adherents, they formed the most sanguine expectations that strong measures would prove ultimately successful.

The Boston port bill was only a part of the coercive plan which administration had now adopted. The civil government of Massachusetts Bay was inadequate, ministers alleged, to the suppression of tumults and the preservation of the peace. To remedy this defect, an act was passed, which should deprive the lower house of assembly in Massachusetts Bay of the privilege of electing the members of the council, and vest that privilege in the crown; authorize the king, or his substitute the governor, to appoint the judges, magistrates, and sheriffs, and empower the sheriffs to summon and return juries; and, for the prevention of factious assemblies, prohibit town meetings from be-

[Dilibranching the civil government of Massachusetts,]

ing called by the select men, unless with the consent of the governor.* In support of the bill, it was alleged, that the force of the civil power consists in the *posse comitatus*, but the posse are the very people who commit the riots. If the democratic part disregarded the laws, how were they to be enforced by the governor? He could neither appoint nor remove magistrates; that power was vested in the council, the members of which were dependent upon the people. The civil magistrate caught the tone and sentiments of the people among whom he lived; from them he ultimately derived his appointment; and, though the military forces were ever so numerous and active, they could not move to support magistracy, as no magistrate could call upon them for assistance. It was therefore necessary to alter the executive and judicial powers of the Massachusetts government, and to form them upon the model of the royal governments in the more southern colonies. It was objected to the bill, that it was an arbitrary and dangerous measure to take away the civil constitution of a whole people secured by a charter, the validity of which was not so much as questioned at law, upon loose allegations of delinquencies and defects, without evidence to show the necessity of such an act. The pretence of annulling the charter to strengthen government, could not stand the test of examination; for the colonies, already regulated in the manner proposed by the bill, were no less inimical to taxation than Massachusetts Bay. The part of the act which affected juries, was framed, without any pretence of abuse; and the case of captain Preston was in itself sufficient to show, that juries could act justly even at the expense of popularity. The cause of the disturbances was not the system of polity; it was the imposition of taxes which had rendered the people dissatisfied, as well in the royal governments as in the other; and no remedy would be efficient, without the removal of the cause. This act had a quite contrary tendency; instead of giving strength to government, it was calculated to annihilate the remains of British authority in the colonies. A petition was presented by Mr. Bollen, the agent of Massachusetts Bay province, praying that the bill might not pass until advice should arrive from the colony, and that they might be heard in their own defence by counsel before their constitution, which had been confirmed by the most solemn charters, was subverted. In the conclusion they made a very strong and pathetic entreaty to the house to consider, "that the restraints which such acts of severity impose, are ever attended with the most dangerous hatred; in a distress of mind which cannot be described, the petitioners conjure the house not to convert that zeal and affection which has hitherto united every American hand and heart in the interests of England, into passions the most painful and pernicious; they most earnestly beseech the house not to attempt reducing them to a state of slavery, which the English principles of liberty that they inherit from their mother country will render worse than death; and that the house will not, by passing these bills, reduce their countrymen to the most abject state of misery and humiliation, or drive them to the last resources of despair." After a very warm debate, the bill was passed by a great majority, on the 22d of May, 1774, in the house of commons; and nine days after, the same arguments being repeated, it passed in the house of peers.

* See Stedman's History, vol. i. p. 89.

[and the administration of justice in that province.]

Lord North now prepared a third bill, "for the impartial administration of justice in the cases of persons questioned for any acts done by them in the execution of the law; or for the suppression of riots and tumults in the province of Massachusetts Bay in New-England." According to the bill, the governor was empowered, if he found that any person indicted for murder, or some other capital offence, incurred in suppressing tumults and riots, should not be likely to have fair trial in the province, to send them to any other colony, or to Great Britain. This bill, the minister alleged, was necessary to give effect to the two others; it was in vain, he said, to appoint a magistracy that would act, if none could be found hardy enough to put their orders into execution. These orders would most probably be resisted, and this resistance would render force necessary to execute the laws; in this case, blood would probably be spilt. Who, said lord North, would risk this event, though in the execution of his clearest duty, if the rioters themselves, or their abettors, were to sit as the judges? How can any man defend himself, on the plea of executing your laws, before those persons who deny your right to make any law to bind themselves? He further alleged, that such an act was not without precedent; smugglers apprehended for offences committed on the coast of Sussex, had been made triable in the county of Middlesex, and the Scotch rebels in England. The proposed act did not tend to establish a military, but a civil government; it gave to the province a council, magistrates, and justices, when in fact they had none before; it did not screen guilt, but protected innocence: we must show the Americans, that we would no longer quietly submit to their insults, and that, when roused, our measures, without being cruel and vindictive, were necessary and efficacious. This act would complete his legislative plan: the rest depended upon vigilance and vigour in the executive government, which his lordship promised should not be wanting. The four regiments usually stationed over America, had all been ordered to Boston, and prosecutions had been directed against the ring-leaders in sedition; he made no doubt that, by the steady execution of the measures now adopted, obedience and the blessings of peace would be restored; *and the event, he predicted, would be advantageous and happy to this country.* This bill was opposed with no less vehemence and force than the two preceding laws: the members in opposition denied its alleged foundation, that it would tend to the impartial administration of justice; if a party spirit against the authority of Great Britain would condemn an active officer there as a murderer, the same party spirit for the authority of Great Britain might here acquit a murderer as a zealous performer of his duty; but the fact was, that though by the bill the people were precluded from the exercise of their rights, no abuse had been proved, or even attempted to be proved: there was no evidence that justice had not been impartially administered by the tribunals established; on the contrary, the instances (colonel Barré observed) which had happened, were direct confutations of such charges. The case of captain Preston was recent; this officer and some soldiers had been indicted at Boston for murder, in killing some persons during the suppression of a riot; they were fairly tried, and fully acquitted. It was an American jury, a New-England jury, a Boston jury, which tried and acquitted the accused. Captain Preston had, under his hand, publicly declared, that the inhabitants of the very town where their fellow-citizens had been

[Speech of colonel Barré.]

slain, acquitted himself. This was the very case which the act supposed. The precedents attempted to be drawn from trials for smuggling, it was contended, were, like those adduced to support the former bills, totally inapplicable. It was not difficult for either a prosecutor or a defendant in Sussex, to attend the trial in Middlesex; but the act now proposed was a virtual indemnity for all murders and capital offences committed in the alleged execution of the laws. The distance was so great, and the expenses would be so heavy, that scarcely any man would undertake to be a prosecutor, even though his near relation were murdered. Ministers were proceeding on the partial information of interested partisans, and upon their misrepresentations had framed the most destructive laws; the consequence of this act would be, the establishment of a military government, replete with the most lawless violence. The people had been long complaining of oppression; and now, that so many troops were ordered to Boston, they would consider them as the instruments of farther tyranny, which there were no longer efficient courts of law to restrain. The soldiers, it was said, unawed by the civil power, and prepossessed with an idea that the people were rebellious, would, in spite of the vigilance of their officers, be guilty of such violence as would rouse its objects to resistance; and the consequence would be open rebellion. "You are (said colonel Barré, in an eloquent and impressive peroration) urging this desperate, this destructive issue; you are urging it with such violence, and by measures tending so manifestly to that fatal point, that, though a state of madness only could inspire such an intention, it would appear to be your deliberate purpose. You have changed your ground; you are becoming the aggressors, and are offering the last of human outrages to the people of America, by subjecting them in effect to military execution. I know the vast superiority of your disciplined troops over the provincials: but beware how you supply the want of discipline by desperation. Instead of offering them the olive branch, you have sent the naked sword; by the olive branch, I mean a repeal of all the late laws, fruitless to you and oppressive to the colonies. Ask their aid in a constitutional manner, and they will give it to the utmost of their ability; they never yet refused it when properly called upon; your journals bear recorded acknowledgments of the zeal with which they have contributed to the general necessity of the state: they might be flattered into any thing, but are not to be driven. Have some indulgence to your own likeness; respect their sturdy English virtue; retract your odious exertions of authority; and remember, that the first step towards making them contribute to your wants, is to reconcile them to your government." Mr. Rose Fuller, venerable for his years and parliamentary experience, and for independence of character, by no means uniformly an opponent to government, and indeed belonging to no party, ended a long speech against this bill with the following words: "I will now take my leave of the whole plan: you will commence their ruin from this day. I am sorry to say, that not only the house has fallen into this error, but the people approve of the measure. The people, I am sorry to say it, are misled; but a short time will prove the evil tendency of this bill. If ever there was a nation running headlong to its destruction, it is this." Whatever reasons could be urged against the bill, the votes for it were very numerous, and it passed the house of commons by a great majority. No less strength of argument was exerted

[Protests against the bills. Mr. Fox. Quebec bill.]

in opposition to this measure in the house of lords; and though from the ample discussion which it had undergone among the commons, little novelty of reasoning could be expected from either side, yet one new consideration was urged against it by the opposing lords. The means adopted, it was alleged, for retaining the colonies in obedience by an army rendered independent of the ordinary course of law in the place where they were employed, would prove the ruin of the nation, by extending that instrument of arbitrary power. Strong protests were framed against the three several bills. The protesting lords were chiefly those of the Rockingham part of opposition; lord Chatham was himself confined by illness: neither his name, those of earls Temple or Shelburne, of lord Camden, or any other of his particular friends, are found in the lists of the dissentients. In the house of commons, the two divisions of anti-ministerial senators spoke strenuously against the series of coercive acts. The orations on these questions displayed distinguished ability on both sides, but the most transcendent genius on the side of opposition. Besides Mr. Burke, that party now possessed Mr. Charles Fox, whose powers far surpassed those of the most brilliant and illustrious commoners that were ranged on the side of administration. This extraordinary man, with his mind fast approaching to maturity, on being abruptly dismissed from his office of a lord of the admiralty, had turned his strength against the minister, and proved the most formidable adversary that he ever encountered while at the head of affairs. From the nature of the subjects, a great portion of the speeches on the three bills being intended to demonstrate their probable effects either good or bad, was prophetic. On comparing the predictions of ministry and of opposition with the actual course of events, the comprehensive reader must see that the great part of what the ministers advanced proved false, and of what opposition advanced proved true. Ministers were, indeed, beyond all question, extremely deficient in information. They had by no means employed sufficient pains to procure an adequate knowledge of facts: but formed their judgment and plans from imperfect materials. Opposition, especially governor Pownall, governor Johnstone, and far beyond all, Mr. Burke, acquired so extensive an acquaintance with the state, sentiments, opinions, and characters of the respective colonies, as afforded light both to themselves and the rest of the party. Opposition, indeed, was anxious to open, and ministers to shut, all avenues to knowledge concerning North America, the most important subject of their councils and plans.

The session was now drawing near the usual season of recess, and many of the members, thinking that no business of importance would be laid before parliament previously to its prorogation, had retired into the country. They were, however, mistaken in their opinion; the plan of government respecting America was not yet complete. In the beginning of June, a bill was brought into the house, for the administration of the province of Quebec. The professed objects of the proposed arrangements were, to ascertain the limits of that province, which extended far beyond what had been settled as such by the king's proclamation of 1763; to secure to the inhabitants the free exercise of their religion, and to the Roman catholic clergy those rights which were agreeable to the articles of capitulation at the time of the surrender of the province; to restore their ancient laws in ci-

[Arguments for and against the Quebec bill.]

vil cases without a trial by jury, as being more acceptable to the French Canadians than the English laws with the trial by jury : and to establish a council, holding their commissions from and at the pleasure of the king, who were to exercise all the powers of legislation, that of imposing taxes only excepted. Such a council, composed principally of the Canadian noblesse, it was supposed, would be more agreeable to the bulk of the people, than a house of representatives.

In favour of this law, it was argued, that political establishments ought to be adapted to the sentiments, opinions, manners, and habits of those for whom they were formed. The French, who constituted a great majority of the inhabitants of Canada, having been accustomed to an absolute government, neither valued nor understood a free constitution. The Canadian French abhorred the idea of a popular representation, from observing the mischiefs that it produced in the colonies adjoining their country. They were not yet ripe for a British constitution ; their landed property had been all granted, and their family settlements made, on the ideas of French law ; as for the laws concerning contracts and personal property, they were nearly the same in France as in England. Having been wholly unused to trial by jury, they disliked it as an innovation ; and the treaty of Paris had secured to the French Canadians the free exercise of their religion, as far as was consistent with the laws of England. Our acts concerning popery, it was asserted, did not, like the king's supremacy, extend beyond the kingdom ; the Roman catholic Canadians were obliged to give a proof of their allegiance ; and an oath was prescribed as a test against papal claims, incompatible with the duty of subjects. By securing their tithes to the popish clergy, the act did no more than restore them to the situation which they held at the conquest ; subject, however, to the disadvantage, that no person professing the protestant religion was to contribute any thing to their support. The extension of the province beyond the limits described in the proclamation, was justified by the plea, that several French families were settled in remote parts of the country, beyond the former districts, and an entire colony was established among the Illinois Indians.

The arguments against the bill were reducible to two heads ; the incongruity and danger of an arbitrary government, established by the British legislature in any part of the empire, and the establishment of the Roman catholic religion. The measure was said to be an experiment of absolute power tried in one colony, in order to extend by degrees that mode of ruling to all the others. The immense enlargement of the boundaries of Canada was alleged to be for the same purpose, to have a powerful instrument for subjugating the colonies. The proposed annihilation of the popular assembly was attributed to the dislike which ministry entertained for the rights of the people. The great security of liberty consisted in the power of having civil actions tried by a jury, and in cases of arbitrary imprisonments, and many other violations of the rights of subjects. This had always been the mode of seeking redress ; and the English laws would be greatly aggrieved in being subjected to French customs, and French forms of trial. On the subject of religion, it was contended, that the capitulation had only provided that the Roman catholic faith should be tolerated. This privilege, opposition was willing to allow them in the fullest extent ; but by the proposed bill, they said, instead of

[Gold coin. Inquiry into the state of the prisons.]

being tolerated, it was established. The people of Canada had hitherto been happy under toleration, and looked for nothing farther. By this establishment, said they, the protestant religion enjoys at least no more than a toleration; for the popish clergy have a legal parliamentary right to a maintenance, while the protestant clergy are left at the king's discretion. Various amendments were proposed in the house of commons, and several changes took place; but the ground-work continued the same. A petition was presented by the city of London to the king, praying him to withhold the royal assent: as the bill regarded religion, a very great popular clamour was excited, and an apprehension of popery revived. It went through the houses, however, with a very great majority, and was, on the 22d of June, passed into a law.

Although America occupied, during this most memorable session, the principal attention of parliament, several other affairs of considerable importance came before the houses. The diminution of the gold coin had been long a subject of general complaint. In the close of the session of 1773, it had been brought before parliament; and an act was passed on the last day of the session, to prevent the counterfeiting or diminishing the gold coin of the kingdom. By the law, the loss on the diminished gold, amounting to a very large sum, fell upon the immediate possessors, and thereby principally affected the great money holders or bankers. During the recess its operation had been severely felt, and the more especially as the commercial world had not yet recovered from the distresses occasioned by the failures of the former year. The law had become very unpopular at the commencement of the session of 1774; and several strictures were passed on the gold coin act, which was affirmed to be highly oppressive and injurious to individuals. Bankers had received coin according to its nominal value, on the public faith, and under the sanction of government. It was very unjust that a particular body of men should be obliged to make good to the public a loss sustained through the iniquity of others, and the culpable negligence of the police, in not restraining such criminal and pernicious practices. The lateness of the season at which the law was proposed, when many members had left town, and the hurry with which it had been carried through the houses, so as to afford no time for examining its nature and tendency, also underwent severe animadversion. It was answered by the minister, that the evil had been so urgent as not to admit of any delay, and that it was necessary to be remedied, even late as it was in the session. He denied that it was unjust; for the loss, he contended, had fallen on those who had been gainers by the situation which occasioned it, and who had always profited by the public money. A committee, however, was appointed to take into consideration the state of the gold coin, and in consequence of their report, weights were established, under the direction of the officers of the mint, a conformity to which was necessary to constitute a current gold coin, and a recoinage took place agreeably to that standard. The effect of these regulations was, that no person could be defrauded in the receipt of gold coin, except by his own negligence in not weighing the proffered money, and this was a very material reform in the great medium of commerce.

During this session a committee having been appointed for in-

[Howard. Prosecutions for libels. Supplies.]

quiring into abuses practised in gaols, among other gentlemen examined was Mr. Howard, sheriff of Bedford, a man of exquisite philanthropy, who, it was found, had visited those mansions of misery through the greater part of England at a very heavy expensæ, and with a continual risk of his life, in order to advise and administer relief. From the reports delivered by him to the house, several improvements were immediately suggested, and many more were ultimately devised, which have since tended so powerfully to mitigate human wretchedness. The thanks of the house were unanimously returned to the benevolent man who had inspected such scenes of distress, for the purpose of alleviation; and the various inquiries which arose from the efforts of Mr. Howard, tended not only to soften the evils of poverty, but to diminish concomitant evils, and to prevent the frequency of infectious distempers, which were before so prevalent, from the squalid and noxious atmosphere of mismanaged gaols.

Some proceedings on an enclosure bill gave rise to a libel, which was severely prosecuted by the commons. Several petitions, it seems, had been presented against the enclosure in question; and the attention bestowed upon these by the speaker, had not satisfied the advocates of the bill. A most virulent letter was immediately printed in the Public Advertiser, charging sir Fletcher Norton with gross partiality. The commons not only acquitted their speaker of the accusation, but voted the letter a false, scandalous, and malicious libel, contrary to all law and justice, and an open violation of their privileges. The printer being summoned, threw himself upon the mercy of the house. He declared that he had received the letter from Mr. Horne; that it had been published in the hurry of business; and, as he had never before offended the house, he expressed his hopes for its compassion. On inquiry, it was found, that Mr. Horne was the Rev. Mr. John Horne, clergyman of Brentford. It was moved, that Mr. Woodfall, the printer, should be committed to the custody of the sergeant at arms; and Mr. Charles Fox, ardent in enmity to the licentiousness of the press, friendly as he has ever shown himself to its liberty, proposed that Newgate should be the scene of confinement; the more gentle motion, however, was carried. Mr. Horne was next summoned, but eluded the order, by pretending not to consider himself as the person to whom it was addressed. The next day being taken into custody, Mr. Horne pleaded not guilty. The only evidence against him being Mr. Woodfall, who was thought to be incompetent because he was himself in custody and a party, Mr. Horne was discharged. Mr. Fox the same day complained of a letter in the Morning Chronicle, as a libel on the constitution and the royal family; and, at his instance, directions were given for prosecuting the printer.

The supplies proposed for this year caused great debates: opposition alleged, that the number of forces, twenty thousand for the fleet, and eighteen thousand for the army, was greater than a peace establishment required, and the expenses being in several articles, and upon the whole, higher than usual, produced loud complaint and severe censure from opposition. The minister admitted the expenditure to be great, but insisted that it arose from circumstances which he could not prevent, and, for the future, he was confident he would be able to lessen the expenditure.

[Literary property ascertained by a decision of the house of peers.]

The house of lords this session, in its judicial capacity, determined the great question of literary property, which was brought before them by an appeal from a decree in chancery. The present age, in this country, favourable to every species of meritorious and beneficial industry, has been peculiarly advantageous to literary ability. In former times, when the circulation of learned productions was confined, and the number of readers small, genius often lay buried in obscurity, and merit was not sufficient, without a fortunate coincidence of circumstances, to insure protection and support: the most successful adventurers could receive no other recompense than the patronage of the great, and at best could only enjoy a precarious and irksome dependence. Since the art of printing has rendered the multiplication of copies easy, and the progress of science and erudition has introduced a taste for reading among numerous classes of people, authors have had it in their power to repay themselves for their labours, without the humiliating idea of receiving a donative. But the degree in which they were to reap this benefit, depended on the security and the duration of their literary property. The protection afforded by the laws of the country to this species of labour, is not only important to the author, but also to the public; for literary works, like all others, will be undertaken and pursued with greater spirit, when, to the motives of public utility and fame, is added the inducement of private emolument.

The occasion which brought this question before the public was as follows: certain booksellers had supposed, that an author possessed by common law an exclusive right for ever to the publication of his own works, and consequently could transfer that right. On this supposition, some of them had purchased copy-rights, and had prosecuted others who published the same books, as invaders of an exclusive right which they had acquired by purchase. A decree of chancery had been obtained in favour of Mr. Becket, a prosecutor on these grounds, against Messrs. Donaldsons, as pirates, in having published a work belonging to Mr. Becket. The defendants had appealed to the house of peers; and the question rested principally on three points: 1st. Whether the author of a book, or literary composition, has a common law right to the sole and exclusive publication of such book, or literary composition? 2. Whether an action for a violation of common law right, will lie against those persons who publish the book or literary composition of an author without his consent? and, 3d. How far the statute of the 8th of queen Anne affects the supposition of a common law right? Under the first head it was contended by the advocates of perpetual literary property, that this right was founded in the general principle by which every man is entitled to the fruits of his own labour. Whoever by the exertion of his rational powers has produced an original work, appears to have a clear right to dispose of the identical work as he pleases; and any attempt to vary the disposition, seems an invasion of that right. The identity of a literary composition consists entirely in the sentiment and language: the same conceptions, clothed in the same words, must necessarily be the same composition; and whatever method be taken of exhibiting that composition to the ear or the eye of another, by recital, by writing, or by printing, in any number of copies, or at any period of time, it is always the identical work of the author which is so exhibited.

[Reasoning of lords Mansfield and Camden.]

On these grounds of natural justice it was contended, that common law respecting literary property was founded, and by that common law the right of an author or his assignee was perpetual. A statute of queen Anne had declared an author and his assigns to have a right to a work for fourteen years, and for fourteen years more if the author should so long live. Certain judges, among whom was lord Kaimes in the court of session,* and Yates† in London, denied that ever such a right existed at common law. This opinion they founded on the following allegations; that a literary composition is in the sole dominion of the author while it is in manuscript; the manuscript is the object only of his own labour, and is capable of a sole right of possession; but this is not the case with respect to his ideas. *No possession can be taken, or any act of occupancy asserted, on mere ideas.* If an author have a property in his ideas, it must be from the time when they occur to him; therefore, if another man should afterwards have the same ideas, he must not presume to publish them, because they were pre-occupied, and become private property. Lord Mansfield showed the fallacy of the maxim, that nothing but corporeal substance can be an object of property; reputation, though no corporeal substance, was property, and a violation thereof was entitled to damages. Every man's ideas are doubtless his own, and not the less so because another person may have happened to fall into the same train of thinking with himself: but this is not the property which an author claims; it is a property in his literary composition, the identity of which consists in the same thoughts, ranged in the same order, and expressed in the same words. This illustrious judge conceived a common law right to the copy of his work to be vested in an author and his assigns originally, and still to exist, notwithstanding the statute of queen Anne. It was agreeable to the principles of right and wrong, convenience and policy, and therefore to the common law. The court of chancery, proceeding upon its conception of moral justice and general equity, had uniformly decreed that this, like every other species of property, was perpetual to the original acquirer, his heirs, assigns, or others to whom it might be transferred by gift, sale, or any other means of transmission. Lord Camden did not contest the conformity to natural justice of either lord Mansfield's principle or the chancery decrees, nor undertake to prove that there was any reason in the nature of literary productions for rendering the property of these less durable than that of other fruits of labour, but confined himself to what he apprehended to be the written law of the land. The statute of queen Anne, he affirmed, took away any right at common law for an author's multiplying copies exclusively for ever, if such right ever existed.

The house of peers concurred in his opinion, the decree was reversed, and thenceforth literary property depends on the statute of the 8th of queen Anne, which secures to the author or his assigns an exclusive property for fourteen years, and fourteen years after the expiration of that period if he so long live; but on the expiration of the one or both of these terms, ordains the copy right to be at an end.

* On a different case, but the same general principle, and in which Donaldson was also defendant, a little before the decree of chancery.

† In the case of Andrew Miller plaintiff, charging Robert Taylor defendant, with publishing and selling copies of Thomson's Seasons, of which Miller alleged himself to be sole proprietor.

[Prorogation of parliament.]

On the 22d of June, was concluded a session of parliament, as important as any that had occurred since the revolution. Changes of great magnitude had been effected in certain colonies, which placed them on a footing totally different from the other British dominions. Civil and political right had been annihilated, and arbitrary power had been established over a considerable part of North America. From those measures, ministers and their supporters, both in and out of parliament, entertained the most sanguine expectations that submission would be immediate, and that complete obedience and tranquillity would be established with permanent security ; while, on the other hand, their opponents apprehended, from the system which they were pursuing, more bitter discontent, and more obstinate resistance, than any that had been exhibited in the former dissensions.

CHAP. XIII.

Continental affairs.—Progress and conclusion of the war between Russia and Turkey—terms of peace.—motives of Catharine.—Poland.—Views of Prussia and Austria.—France.—Death of Louis XV.—character—tool of his favourites, he did not discern the commencing changes of public opinion.—Promising beginnings of Louis XVI.—Spain deprives the inquisition of its most terrible powers.—America.—Effects of the Boston port bill—ferment through the provinces—communicates to other colonies.—Resolutions of the provincial assemblies—general concert proposed—solemn league and covenant.—A general congress meets at Philadelphia—approves of the conduct of Massachusetts, and promises support—declares principles and objects of association.—Declaration of rights—of grievances, and proposed redress.—Petition to the king.—Address to the people of Britain.—Of Canada.—Remonstrance to general Gage.—Address to the colonies.—Meeting breaks up.—General spirit of the colonial proceedings.—Military preparations.—Massachusetts Bay the great hinge of peace and war—contention with the governor—forms a provincial congress, which assumes the supreme power.

In continental Europe, the Russians and Turks still continuing their bloody war, occupied the chief attention of their neighbours. Vigorous preparations were made on both sides; Catharine, from the superiority which she had manifested during the greater part of the war, expected that success must ultimately attend her armies when powerfully re-enforced; while the Turks, elated with the advantage of the preceding campaign, and farther encouraged by the success of the rebellion in the eastern and southern provinces of Russia under Pugatcheff, hoped by military exertions to regain what they had lost. The Porte excited the Tartars to join the Russian rebels, in order to increase the disturbances of Russia on that side, while the Turkish force should be concentrated against their main army on the Danube. In the beginning of this year, the death of the emperor Mustapha produced a change in the disposition and conduct of the army. Considering his son Selim, then in the thirteenth year of his age, as too young to sustain the reins of government in so critical a situation of affairs, he appointed his brother Abdulhamet to succeed him on the throne. Some of the Janizaries were dissatisfied with the succession of the late sultan's brother, wishing Selim to be placed immediately on his father's throne; and, as these troops influenced the whole Turkish army, their dissensions created parties among the rest of the forces. A very great army, however, was levied, consisting (when they arrived at the Danube) of two hundred thousand men. Marshal Romanzow was posted on the other side of the river with about eighty thousand soldiers. After a considerable opposition, Romanzow crossed the river, and Bulgaria again became the scene of war. A severe engagement took place between general Saliöf at the head of a detachment of Russians, and a body of Turks, in which the former with much difficulty kept the field. On the 20th of June, generals Kaminshi and Suwarrow encountered the Reis Effendi, who was at the head of forty thousand men; but both the cavalry and infantry of the Turks deserted their colours and camp, without striking a blow. From

[Peace between Russia and Turkey. Motives of Catharine.]

this time the Ottomans were in every quarter seized with a dismay that made them absolutely refuse to face the enemy ; and, in fine, they mutinied against their own leaders. They plundered the baggage, robbed and murdered their officers, disbanded themselves, and pillaged their own country all the way to Constantinople. The grand camp under the vizier was deserted, and his immense army crumbled away to an inconsiderable number. Marshal Romanzow, not failing to take advantage of this dreadful situation of the enemy, cut off all communication between them, their magazines, and the capital. The Turkish leaders had now no alternative, but to sue for peace on such terms as the conqueror should dictate. The conditions were, the cession of Asoph, Kinbrun, and Janikala to the Russians ; the free navigation of the Propontis, Euxine, and Archipelago : the independence of the Crimea ; and the sum of 4,500,000 rubles,* as an indemnification for the expense of the war. So moderate were these terms, that they were little more than what Russia had demanded while the Turkish armies were entire. Did we consider Russia merely in relation to her enemy, we might be surprised that she did not impose harder conditions on a foe that had given her great disturbance, had actually been the aggressor, and was now at her mercy ; but, on viewing her situation, both internally and relatively to other powers, we must be convinced that she was guided by sound policy. There were two powerful parties at the court of Petersburg, one headed by count Panin, and the other by count Orloff : the former had recommended peace on moderate terms ; the latter, the continuance of the war, unless the enemy yielded to the conditions which Russia chose to dictate. Catharine, who found it her interest to observe a neutrality between the two parties, both of which she knew to be zealously attached to her own government, had now an opportunity of gratifying them both ; the one by concluding peace, the other by imposing the terms. The rebel Pugatcheff, a man of great abilities, intrepid courage, and rapid enterprize, was becoming daily more formidable. Her treasure was nearly exhausted by the expenses of the war, and the improvement of her extensive dominions was greatly interrupted. The Poles were in many places in a state of insurrection, especially in her part of the divided territories ; and combinations were forming for a more general assertion of their rights. Austria, although she agreed in the partition of Poland, was not by her recent share of spoils lulled to a forgetfulness of the dangers which might accrue to her from her partners in the plunder. She still regarded with the most vigilant jealousy the progress of the Russian arms so near her frontiers. The king of Prussia himself, closely connected as he was with the czarina, by no means desired her aggrandizement where he could not come in for a share of the accession. The more southern powers she well knew to be very much inclined to oppose her and her advances ; her ally, Great Britain, was fully occupied with her own internal and colonial affairs. For all these reasons, it was the interest of Catharine to conclude a peace on the terms which she proposed ; and she soon reaped the advantage of her policy, by being enabled to vanquish the Polish insurgents, to crush intestine revolt, and bestow a less divided attention on improving her immense dominions in various constituents of national prosperity.

* At 4s. 6d.

{Death and character of Louis XV. Popularity of his successor.}

In France an event took place this year, which caused a great change in the internal policy of that country. On the 10th of May, Louis XV. died, in the sixty-fifth year of his age, and the fifty-ninth of his reign. This king, who possessed very moderate talents, was educated in the ignorance so general among arbitrary princes in long established governments, where little personal effort is necessary to maintain a slavery confirmed by prescription, and in that luxury which had so long prevailed at the court of France. Of a pleasing figure, he acquired those exterior accomplishments and light graces which the joint vivacity and frivolity of fashionable France were so well fitted for bestowing. He was in one sense a man of good dispositions, for he was mild and compassionate, unless driven to be otherwise by the impulse of his counsellors. He did not exercise tyranny from inclination and choice, but often permitted it from imbecility. Having neither vigour of understanding nor firmness of mind for governing himself, he was through life the pupil of others. Always in a state of intellectual minority, the administration of his affairs was wise or foolish, good or bad, according to the character of those who happened to be his guardians. Thus, during the ministry of cardinal Fleury, his policy was pacific; afterwards aggressively warlike and ambitious; and in the latter period of his life, he was again pacific. Under some ministers, he was moderate in his internal government; under others, he was despotic. When priests presided in his cabinet, he was the tool of clerical encroachment; when deists took the direction, he was the agent of irreligion, by weakening the veneration of his people for the institutions of the church. His violent proceedings against the parliaments arose not from the violence but from the weakness, of his character; he was then under the tutelage of tyrannical ministers. A reign of near sixty years bears no stamp of uniformity of character. His principles, sentiments, and conduct, varied with the successive changes of his ministers and mistresses. Louis XV. was nominally, but not really the sovereign of France: for civil, military, and political operations, for every department of government, we find the real sovereigns in the royal favourites. Louis was, however, sufficiently qualified for being a mere pageant of state, and going through the forms of sovereignty in the paralysed stillness of undisputed despotism; he was therefore very fit for sitting on a throne so much adored as it had been in the reign of his predecessor, and as it was during a great part of his own. Toward the close, a spirit manifested itself which required a prince of a different character to manage; and though its operations were checked, yet the repression was only temporary, and the very means employed to stop its progress, gave it ultimately an augmented force. Louis was succeeded by his grandson, who ascended the throne by the title of Louis XVI. This prince, long distinguished for amiableness of disposition, was extremely popular. On his accession to the throne, he showed himself sensible that a change was taking place in the national sentiments, and that it was the wisest policy in a king to accommodate his administration to such a change. He therefore annulled the unpopular measures of the late reign, set about restoring the ancient parliaments, and promoted popular men to various offices; at the same time, however, he circumscribed the pretensions of the parliaments, granting them only their established functions, without suffering them to make those encroachments on kingly prerogative, which, guided in some instances more by the principles of

[Change in the inquisition. Effects of the Boston port bill.]

liberty than by prevailing usage, they had attempted during the latter years of his grandfather. He had not, indeed, changed the ministry, but he had changed the counsels. The nation, delighted with the restoration of parliaments and the other popular acts of their monarch, overlooked the circumscriptions; and as the king appeared to make the happiness of his people the rule of his conduct, he was regarded by them with the warmest affection: such was the first prospect of the reign of Louis the sixteenth.

The king of Spain was at this time engaged in a war with the emperor of Morocco, which was carried on in desultory hostilities for several years with very little success. This year, however, is remarkable in Spain; for in it that tremendous instrument of superstition and tyranny, the inquisition, was deprived of its most formidable powers. The court of Madrid, intent on the promotion of manufactures and commerce, and aware of the obstruction which they received from the dread of such an intolerant tribunal, took from it its jurisdictions and its prisons, and rendered it little more than a convocation for religious discussion.

Having narrated the measures pursued concerning America, and stated the effects which they were expected to produce, our history now proceeds to their actual consequences.

In the month of May the intelligence arrived at Boston, of the act passed by the British parliament for shutting up the port. This information, together with a copy of the act, was immediately published on a paper with a black border, symbolical of mourning, and hawked about the streets as a barbarous and bloody murder of rights and liberties. The fatal news was wholly unexpected, and the consternation which it caused among all orders of people was inexpressible; and nothing was to be heard from the Bostonians, but frantic expressions of rage and resentment against the tyranny and inhumanity of the British ministry and parliament; vengeance was loudly demanded and threatened.* They lost little time in general exclamations and menaces, but proceeded to consider what could be done for redress; a town meeting was held, resolutions were proposed and adopted, which, after expatiating on the impolicy, injustice, and cruelty of the act, and appealing from it to God and to man, addressed themselves particularly to the other colonies, and invited them to enter into an agreement to stop all imports and exports to and from Britain and Ireland, and every part of the West Indies, until the act should be repealed; the only measure (they said) that was left for the salvation of North America and her liberties. These resolutions were transmitted with great expedition to the rest of the provinces, and copies of the act were multiplied and despatched to every part of the continent with wonderful celerity; which, like the torch of the fury, set in a flame the countries through which they passed: in the several colonies great bodies of the people were called together by public advertisement, and the odious law was burned with awful solemnity. Meanwhile general Gage arrived in his government at Boston: this officer being personally known there, as well as in other parts of America, was much beloved and highly respected; he was, besides, successor to a very unpopular governor. These circumstances, however, which would have been so auspicious to his entrance upon government had affairs been in

* Stedman's History of the American War, vol. i. p. 93.

[Resolutions of provincial assemblies. General concert proposed.]

a tranquil state, were now counteracted by the prevalent rage against Britain. The assembly met; and he informed them, that on the 1st of June they were to remove to Salem, which was thenceforward to be the seat of the provincial government. The assembly, not pleased with this intimation, petitioned him to appoint a day for a general fast and prayer; but he declined compliance, and soon afterwards adjourned the session to the 7th of June, appointing Salem to be the place of meeting.

The other colonies having received copies of the act, and of the Bostonian addresses, resolved to support the cause which they considered as their own. However much the middle and southern colonies had, on general principles of government, differed from their northern neighbours, they agreed in repugnance to taxation. On that ground they had all resisted the import of tea, and thus had shared in the alleged criminality of Boston. Though some were more temperate than others, they all concurred in expressing the greatest disapprobation of the measures pursued by the British government, an abhorrence of the new act, a condemnation of the principles on which it was founded, and a resolution to oppose its effects, and to support their brethren who were to be its immediate victims. Indeed, if ministry had formed a design of driving the Americans into confederation, they could not have devised more effectual means, than by punishing and disfranchising one colony, because unknown persons in it had been guilty of an outrage that sprung from resistance to an impost which all the colonies reprobated. The assembly of Virginia, which was sitting at the time when the despatches from Boston arrived, set the example: in that meeting a resolution was passed, for appointing the 1st of June, the day on which the Boston port bill was to take effect, to be set apart as a day of fasting, prayer, and humiliation, “to implore the divine interposition to avert the heavy calamity which threatened destruction to their rights, with all the evils of a civil war, and to give one heart and one mind to the people, firmly to oppose every injury to American liberties.” Informed of the resolution and of the general spirit of the assembly, the earl of Dunmore determined to dissolve that body; but the members held a private meeting, in which they drew up a declaration, setting forth, that the punishment about to be inflicted on the inhabitants of Boston, in order to compel them to submit to the PAYMENT OF UNCONSTITUTIONAL TAXES, was in truth an attack on all the colonies, and would ultimately prove destructive to American rights and liberties, unless their united wisdom should be applied to prevent its operation and effects. They therefore recommended to the committee of correspondence, to propose to the committees of the other colonies, that an annual congress should be held for all the colonies, to deliberate on such general measures as the common interest of America might from time to time require. Virginia had always been distinguished for loyalty and attachment to the British constitution; and in its present proposition to combine against acts of government, it declared itself to be determined by constitutional principles. At Philadelphia, three hundred of the inhabitants assembling, appointed a committee to write to Boston. In a letter, temperate yet firm, they recommended that lenient measures should be tried before they had recourse to extremities; and that commerce with Britain should not entirely be discontinued until all measures had failed. If, by satisfying the East India company for the teas, they could terminate the unhappy controversy, and leave to the

[Solemn league and covenant of Massachusetts.]

Bostonians their ancient constitutional liberty, there could be no doubt what part wisdom would dictate. But the matter in consideration was not now the value of the tea, it was the indefeasible right of giving or withholding their own money, a right from which they could never recede. At New-York, though moderate and temperate in its conduct, one resolution of a contrary kind was carried in a town meeting; this was, to prevent the prosecution in the provincial courts, of any debts owing by inhabitants to Britain. This resolution, however, was neither adopted nor confirmed by the provincial assembly held soon after, nor was it any where carried into practice. In general, the proposals for a total interruption of commerce, were by no means favourably received, but considered as the last deplorable resort when every other expedient should prove ineffectual. The middle and southern colonies were at that time evidently desirous of avoiding a rupture with Britain. On the other hand, all the colonies concurred in a resolution to resist taxation, and to hold a general congress; and in the mean time they made very liberal contributions for the relief of the Bostonians. While the Boston port bill was producing an effect so very opposite to that which its framers and supporters expected and intended, copies arrived in Massachusetts Bay of the other two bills for altering the constitution of that province. The opposition to government now became more vehement through the colonies. Concerning the Boston port bill, the other provinces had not taken their tone from Massachusetts Bay, but had resolved to support the cause on the principles of the British constitution. The Massachusetts colonists had then applied to their neighbours as suppliants; and, somewhat doubtful of the reception that they should meet, had cautiously abstained from promulgating doctrines and sentiments which might shock the loyalty and constitutional principles of their southern brethren. Assured of the co-operation of the other colonies in resisting taxes, and trusting that the concert might be more extensive, they now took a lead; and henceforward the deliberations of the whole most frequently bore the stamp of New-England republicanism. The colonists of Massachusetts now determined to carry to the utmost extremity their resistance to the British government. By the suggestion of the provincial assembly, an association was framed, the subscribers to which most solemnly bound themselves to break off all commercial intercourse with Great Britain from the last day of the month of August, until the Boston port bill, and the other obnoxious acts of parliament should be repealed, and the colony restored to the exercise of its chartered rights; to renounce all dealings with those who should refuse to enter into this agreement; or who having engaged, should afterwards violate their compact. To sanction the whole, a resolution was added, that the names of delinquents should be published in the newspapers as enemies to their country.* To this agreement they gave the memorable title of the SOLEMN LEAGUE AND COVENANT; which, having been a name affixed in the last century to an engagement inimical to the church and monarchy, afforded some indication of the views which they entertained, and the lengths to which they were disposed to proceed. In most of the colonies there were three classes of political opinions; the first, of those who resolved to resist taxation, and advised the most violent measures to be immediately adopt-

* See Stedman, and Ramsay.

[Proclamation of general Gage. Hostile preparations.]

ed: secondly, of those persons who, equally determined to impose British imposts, were more cautious and temperate, and who wished to try the effect of conciliatory propositions, before they resorted to the extremity of resistance; the third consisted of approvers of the British system and acts. This third set was small in number, and of no weight in the colonial deliberations. The second, in the beginning, predominated in most of the other colonies; the first was paramount in Massachusetts Bay, where there evidently prevailed, not merely a disposition to resist acts on the ground of incompatibility with the rights of British subjects, but of contrariety to their conception of republican freedom.

General Gage, to counteract the covenant, issued a proclamation, which declared it illegal and traitorous, contrary to the allegiance due to the king, and subversive of the authority of parliament; and cautioned the people against giving any countenance to that engagement, under the penalties annexed to such heinous offences. This act was far from producing the desired effect, by deterring the colonists from the combination. Popular writers found in it a theme for the display of ingenuity and legal knowledge, in showing that the governor, by calling that association traitorous, assumed a power not claimed by the king himself, of making that conduct treason, which was not ordained to be treason by the laws, and thus rendering the declared will of one of the king's officers equivalent to an act of the legislature. General Gage, perceiving the sentiments and intentions of the people of Massachusetts to be so unfavourable to the British government, as to require, for their repression, more powerful restraints than proclamations, ordered some regiments of foot, with a detachment of artillery, to be sent to Boston. These, upon their arrival, were encamped on a common between the isthmus* called Boston-neck, which joins the peninsula of Boston to the continent, and the town itself. The professed intention of the governor was, to prevent desertion, then very much encouraged by the provincials; but this disposition of the troops was construed to be designed for the purpose of blocking up the town, and compelling it by famine to submit to any terms which might be imposed. The inhabitants of the adjacent country assured the Bostonians, that several thousands of armed men were ready to assist them, should their aid be necessary.

In August, commissions arrived for those who were intended to constitute the new council, by the act for altering the constitution of Massachusetts. Of thirty-six, twenty-four only accepted the commissions; and against those the rage of the people was so great, that all but a few who resided in Boston, and were protected by the troops to save their property and lives, resigned their appointments. So many obstructions, indeed, occurred in every department, that civil government was entirely dissolved; whoever rendered himself odious, by discovering his attachment to the mother country, and a wish to submit to her laws, was insulted by the populace; and many, hunted from their dwellings in the country, were obliged to take refuge in Boston. Arms were provided, ammunition and warlike stores began to be collected, and the young men were employed in training themselves to military discipline. Per-

* The reader may perhaps not recollect, that Boston is situated in a peninsula. This geographical fact, however, is very necessary to be attended to in the course of the history.

[Meeting of a general congress at Philadelphia.]

ceiving such appearances of hostile intention, general Gage ordered all the military stores which were deposited in the several magazines through the provinces, to be brought to Boston. The colonists, apprehending from this measure that he meant to commence hostilities, several thousands of militia marched toward Boston: finding that none had been attempted, they retired; but the general thought it expedient to fortify Boston-neck against future attacks. The colonists of Massachusetts now began to make vigorous preparations for a forcible resistance to the British government; associations were formed for promoting the knowledge of military discipline, and the use of arms; resolutions were passed for holding a provincial congress, which, without any regard to the governor, should be considered as the legislature of the colony. They even remonstrated on the raising fortifications, and the seizure of the public magazines; thus interfering with the executive authority of the crown. They declared, that should any person be seized for supporting the cause of the colonies, they would retaliate upon every British officer whom they could find; and, lastly, they recommended to the receivers of the public revenue, to keep it in their own hands, until the constitution of the province was restored, or until it should be otherwise disposed of by a provincial convention.

Though the other colonies did not proceed to such extremities, nor make any preparations for war, yet all, except Georgia, concurred in resolving to hold a congress, and not submit to the payment of any internal taxes that were not imposed by their own assemblies; and to suspend all commerce with the mother country, until the American grievances in general, and those of Massachusetts Bay in particular, should be fully redressed. In the proceedings of the congress, instructed by the respective colonies, we fully see the dispositions and views of the Americans.

The attention of all parties was now turned to the general congress, which, on the 5th of September, met at Philadelphia, as a central situation. The congress consisted of fifty-one delegates, representing twelve of the colonies lying along the shores of the Atlantic, from New Hampshire to South Carolina inclusive: the greatest number of delegates of any one colony being seven, and the smallest two. But this disparity in the number of delegates did not affect the votes; as it was agreed that each colony should have but one vote, whatever was its number of delegates. The delegates received their instruction from their constituents; some of these violent, and some moderate; but all uniting in condemning the Boston port bill, and the other acts of the last session of parliament relating to Massachusetts Bay, and in denying the right of the British parliament to tax the colonies. But the most material of their instructions, and what in a great measure superseded the use of all others, was a power given to their delegates to agree to whatever measures should meet with the concurrence of a majority of the congress.* The congress sat with their doors locked; no one was permitted to be present at their deliberations; and all their proceedings, except those which they thought fit to publish, were kept profoundly secret. Assembled, says captain Stedman, in the cause of freedom, they nevertheless thought fit to observe a form practised only in the most despotic governments.

* See Stedman.

[Approbation of the conduct of Massachusetts. Principles and objects of congress.]

Their proceedings being wrapped up in mystery, and all the intermediate steps leading to a conclusion being hidden from the public eye, their decrees when promulgated, were received like the oracles of ancient times, as the dictates of profound wisdom.

The first public act of the congress was, a declaratory resolution manifesting their disposition with respect to the colony of Massachusetts Bay, and immediately intended to confirm and encourage that people. They expressed their sympathy with the sufferings of their countrymen in that province, under the operation of the late unjust, oppressive, and cruel acts of the British parliament; they thoroughly approved of the wisdom and fortitude with which the opposition to these ministerial measures had hitherto been conducted, and declared that contributions for alleviating the distress of their brethren at Boston, should be continued as long as their exigencies required relief. They further declared that, if the British government attempted to carry the acts complained of into execution by force, all America should combine in opposing that force. They recommended to the inhabitants of Massachusetts Bay, that as justice could be no longer legally administered by the late acts, they should submit to its suspension until they were repealed; and that every person who should judge or act under any commission or authority derived from the late act of parliament changing the form of government, and violating the charter of that province, ought to be held in detestation, and considered as the wicked tool of a despotism, which prepared to destroy the rights that God, nature, and compact had conferred on America. They passed a resolution, declaring that the transportation of any person for the trial of offences committed in America, justified and ought to produce resistance and reprisals.*

The congress also proceeded to declare the principles and objects of their association. They avowed their allegiance to his majesty, their affection to Britain, their dependence upon her, and the benefits and favours which they had received from the parent state. In the most explicit terms they disclaimed any wish of separating from the mother country; but at the same time they declared themselves entitled to a participation of all the rights and privileges of British free-born subjects; that the present grievances and distresses arose from a ruinous system of colonial administration, adopted by the British ministry about the year 1763, and evidently calculated for enslaving these colonies, and with them the British empire. Thence had arisen the acts for taxing America, and for depriving American subjects of the constitutional trial by juries; thence the late cruel, oppressive, and unconstitutional plans concerning Boston and the whole province; and the plan of extending Canada, establishing an arbitrary government, and discouraging the settlements of British subjects in that country, and disposing and enabling the established inhabitants to act with hostility against the freedom of the protestant colonies. To obtain redress for these grievances, they thought that the best, most effectual, and peaceable measure would be, to abstain from every species of commercial intercourse with Britain, until that redress should be obtained by a repeal of all the coercive acts. On the one hand, they specified the various articles of merchandise in which they had dealt with Britain, and which they now combined to refuse; on the

* Stedman's History of the American War, vol. i. p. 103.

[Petition to the king. Address to the people of Great Britain.]

other, they enumerated the various acts, or clauses of acts, of which they required the repeal. The amount of their requisition was the reversal of the whole ministerial system pursued since 1763. They afterwards agreed to petition the king, and accordingly framed a representation to his majesty. Perhaps subjects never offered to their sovereign an address consisting of stronger and more comprehensive reasoning, with more impressive eloquence : it stated every important act since the change of system in 1764 ; its peculiar features, its general principles, and its connexion with other acts ; it exhibited the whole plan of recent and present government, with the actual and probable consequences : the petitioners declared the warmest attachment and the highest veneration for the king and the constitution ; they wanted no new privileges, but merely prayed to be restored to their former rights, which other British subjects still enjoyed ; we ask (they said) but for peace, liberty, and safety ; we wish not a diminution of the prerogative ; we do not solicit the grant of any new right in our favour ; your royal authority over us, and our connexion with Great Britain, we shall always carefully and zealously endeavour to support and maintain. The peroration very happily united the respectful deference of loyalty with the temperate firmness of freedom. " Permit us, then, most gracious sovereign, in the name of all your faithful people in America, with the utmost humility to implore you, for the honour of almighty God, whose pure religion our enemies are undermining ; for your glory, which can be advanced only by rendering your subjects happy, and keeping them united ; for the interests of your family *depending on an adherence to the principles that enthroned it* ; for the safety and welfare of your kingdoms and dominions, threatened with almost unavoidable dangers and distresses ; that your majesty, as the loving father of your whole people, connected by the same bonds of law ; loyalty, faith, and blood, though dwelling in various countries, will not suffer the transcendent relation formed by these ties, to be further violated, in uncertain expectation of effects, which, if attained, never can compensate *for the calamities through which they must be gained*. We therefore most earnestly beseech your majesty, that your royal authority and interposition may be used for our relief ; and that a gracious answer may be given to this petition : that your majesty may enjoy every felicity through a long and glorious reign over loyal and happy subjects, and that your descendants may inherit your property and dominions till time shall be no more, is, and always will be, our sincere and fervent prayer."—The petition was subscribed by all the fifty-one delegates.

An address was then framed to the people of Great Britain, which was also a very masterly composition ; it stated, that the Americans, sprung from the same ancestors as the Britons, entertained the same sentiments and principles which had produced and supported, the British constitution, and considered themselves entitled to equal rights with other British subjects. " We consider ourselves, and do insist that we are, and ought to be, as free as our fellow subjects in Britain ; and that no power on earth has a right to take our property from us without our consent. We claim all the benefits secured to the subject by the English constitution, and particularly that inestimable one of the trial by jury. We hold it essential to English liberty, that no man be condemned unheard, or punished for supposed offences, without having an opportunity of making his defence." Having detailed the various grievances which

[Address to the Canadians. Declaration of rights and grievances.]

they alleged themselves to have suffered; they endeavoured to show, that the people of England had in the last century contended with their kings for the preservation of the same rights which the Americans were now deprived of by a British parliament. They insisted that the oppression was essentially the same, although the oppressors were changed. But not altogether relying on the efficacy of this appeal to the justice of the nation, the address endeavoured to gain it over to the cause of America, by representing, that the certain consequences of unconditional submission being exacted from her, would be the subversion of the constitution of the mother country, by the tyrannical aristocracy which was engrafted on the power of the crown. They expressed deep regret at being obliged to adopt measures detrimental in their consequences to numbers of their fellow subjects in Great Britain and Ireland; but they hoped, that the magnanimity and justice of the British nation, would furnish a parliament of such wisdom, independence, and public spirit, as might save the violated rights of the whole empire from the devices of *wicked ministers* and *evil counsellors*, whether in or out of office; and thereby restore that harmony, friendship, and fraternal affection, between all the inhabitants of his majesty's kingdoms and territories, so ardently wished for by every true and honest American. Their several addresses were indeed particularly well adapted to the temper and passions of the parties whom they endeavoured to gain. They also addressed the inhabitants of Canada; described with great eloquence the blessings of a free constitution, and the advantages which the Canadians might have reaped from the enjoyment of such a system. Ministers had, they said, kept those new subjects of Britain ignorant of its advantages; they therefore undertook to explain them to the Canadian French, and endeavoured to excite the indignation of that province against the late acts, as precluding them from the freedom which, in their new relation as British subjects, they ought to enjoy. They paid high compliments to their countryman Montesquieu; and having endeavoured to show that the new plan of governing Canada was most disgraceful to its subjects and injurious to its rights, they quoted his sentiments delivered in a chapter on the British constitution; from which they inferred, that this great political philosopher would have deemed the Canadians to be in a state of slavery. They concluded with strenuously inviting them to join in the league of the colonies. The congress likewise published a declaration of rights and grievances. This paper contained a summary of all the privileges appertaining to British subjects; to the free exercise of these they were, they contended, entitled by the immutable laws of nature, by the British constitution, and by their several charters. All former distinctions between legislation and impost, between external and internal taxes, were now laid aside. They claimed, on behalf of the colonies, the sole and exclusive privilege of legislating for themselves in all cases whatsoever; but, from the mere necessity of circumstances, were willing to submit to such acts of parliament as were *bona fide* intended to regulate their foreign commerce; excluding, however, all ideas of taxation, internal or external, for raising a revenue from the people of the colonies without their own consent. Their grievances (they said) arose from eleven acts of parliament* passed in the present reign; but the most

* All these have been successively mentioned, and most of them repeatedly alluded to in the course of the history.

[General spirit of the colonial proceedings. Military preparations.]

intolerable resulted from the three acts of the last session of parliament respecting the colony of Massachusetts Bay, and the law for extending the limits of Canada. They wrote a letter to general Gage, declaring it to be the fixed and unalterable resolution of all the colonies to unite for the preservation of their common rights, in opposition to the late acts of parliament, and in support of their brethren of Massachusetts Bay. They remonstrated against his military proceedings, bearing (they said) a hostile appearance, which even the tyrannical acts did not warrant. They requested that he would discontinue the fortifications, and give orders that the intercourse between the town and country should be uninterrupted; they addressed the colonies, declaring that, upon impartially examining the conduct of the British government in North America from 1763, they found that all the disturbances had proceeded from an unconditional assumption and oppressive acts on the part of Britain. Representing perseverance in union as the only means of security against the arbitrary designs so evident in the conduct of the British ministers, they proceeded to state the trust which was reposed in the congress, and the manner in which they discharged their duty; that, notwithstanding the series of oppression experienced from Britain, they had made conciliatory advances; and while, inspired by constitutional liberty, they had shown themselves resolved to maintain their rights, guided by loyalty to their king, and affection to their fellow subjects, they had manifested their earnest desire of preserving peace and amity with their mother country. After the performance of these acts, during a session of fifty-one days, the first general congress of the North American provinces, on the 26th of October, terminated its meeting.

The amount of the reasonings and the spirit of the proceedings, in either partial meetings, provincial assemblies, or the general congress, may be exhibited in few words; "The British system from 1763 has violated the chartered and constitutional rights of us, the British subjects in the American colonies: we will not submit to such usurpation; we will not pay duties unjustly imposed, and we will have no commerce with Britain until the obnoxious acts be repealed. If the British government attempt to enforce its unconstitutional decrees, self-preservation compels us, and our condition enables us, to resist force by force. Yet that extremity we deprecate as pernicious to both parties: we pray our sovereign and request our fellow-subjects, to co-operate with us in averting so deplorable a calamity. We ask no new privilege; we desire only the restoration of those rights which, until 1763, we enjoyed without interruption." Such were the sentiments and acts of the colonists in North America; such the first consequences of the ministerial system of 1774.

Before the meeting of the general congress, none of the middle or southern colonies had commenced preparations for war; but when that convention broke up and its members returned to their constituents, the other provinces became actuated by the spirit of New-England. The militia were very frequently assembled for the purpose of discipline; arms were provided for those who were without them; and resistance, by open force, to the power of the mother country, was made the subject of common discourse. Soon afterwards a copy arrived of a proclamation issued in England, to prevent warlike stores from being exported: and

[Massachusetts. Contention with the governor.]

this prohibition rendered the inhabitants of the colonies more eager to procure supplies of the various kinds of ammunition.

In consequence of the determination of congress, all the colonies deeply interested themselves in the affairs of Massachusetts Bay; and upon the transactions in that province, depended more immediately the doubtful issue of peace and war. The governor and council had issued writs for holding a general assembly; but the events that afterwards took place, and the heat and violence which every where prevailed, made them think it expedient to countermand their writs by a proclamation, and to defer holding the assembly to a season of more security. The election, however, was carried on, without regard to the proclamation; the new members met at Salem, but the governor did not attend to administer the oaths and open the session. Having waited a day, and neither the governor nor any substitute for him arriving *they voted themselves into a provincial congress*, to be joined by such others as had been or should be elected for that purpose. Mr. Hancock,* who was offensive to the governor's party, was chosen chairman, and they adjourned to the town of Concord, about twenty miles from Boston. Thence they presented a remonstrance to the governor, on the subject of the fortifications at Boston-neck, and the alarm occasioned by the collection of military force at Boston, tending to endanger the lives, liberty, and property, not only of the Bostonians, but of the whole province. The general, though unwilling to return an answer to an illegal assembly, thought it expedient in the present case to overlook forms. In replying to the provincial congress, he told them, that the lives and liberties of none but avowed enemies of Britain, could be in danger from British soldiers, who, notwithstanding the enmity which had been shown to them in withholding what was necessary for their preservation, had not discovered that resentment which might have been expected from such hostile treatment. He reminded them that while they were complaining of alterations made in their charter, they were themselves subverting it by their present illegal meeting; and he admonished them to desist from such unconstitutional proceedings. Boston was now become the place of refuge to all the friends of British government. On the approach of winter, the governor thought it necessary to erect temporary barracks for the troops, not only to accommodate his soldiers, but to prevent them from being quartered on the inhabitants; which, in the present state and temper of both, might be attended with dangerous consequences. The Bostonians did every thing in their power, without employing open violence, to obstruct the erections. Very great mutual distrust and animosity prevailed between the government and the people. Boston, however, was now the only place in Massachusetts that contained British forces; and from the hostile disposition of the provincials, and the insulated situation which they occupied, their circumstances were not much unlike to those of persons besieged by open enemies. The provincial congress not only continued their sittings, but passed resolutions which, from the disposition and promptitude of the people, had all the weight and efficacy of laws; their injunctions, under the form of

* This was the same gentleman, the seizure of whose sloop for contraband practices had occasioned an insurrection at Boston in the year 1768; and the consequences of which insurrection are supposed by many to have precipitated the dispute between the mother country and her colonies toward its crisis.

[Proceedings of the provincial congress.]

advice, directed the regulation and exercise of the militia, the collection and disposition of the public revenue, and the provision of arms and military stores. Thus they assumed the powers of the supreme government; and in the first provincial congress of Massachusetts, we see, strongly drawn, the outlines of American independence. The governor thought it necessary to issue a proclamation, warning the inhabitants of the province against suffering themselves to be ensnared by the provincial congress, or led by their influence to incur the penalties of sedition and rebellion; and strictly prohibiting all his majesty's loyal subjects from paying any regard to the recommendations and resolves of such an unlawful assembly. But the governor's proclamation was treated with contempt, while the requisitions of the provincial congress were obeyed as laws. That assembly appointed another congress to be held in the month of February 1775, and toward the end of November dissolved itself.

CHAP. XIV.

Impression in Britain from the American disputes.—Dissolution of parliament.—General election.—Leading characters in the new parliament.—Meeting of parliament.—King's speech—address—indecision of ministers.—Character and policy of lord North—opinions of his power and efficiency.—Petitions presented from America, and American merchants, to parliament and the king—dismissed without a hearing.—Lord Chatham, though loaded with infirmities, returns to the house—his introductory speech—his plan of conciliation rejected.—Conquest of America conceived by ministers to be easy.—Americans asserted to be all cowards.—Mr. Fox's observations on the inspiring efficacy of liberty.—Parliament declares Massachusetts Bay to be in a state of rebellion.—Message from the king, requiring an augmentation of forces.—Bill for prohibiting the New-England provinces from commerce and fishery.—Lord North's plan of conciliation—apprehended by courtiers to concede too much, by opposition to concede too little.—Mr. Fox opposes its inconsistency.—Lord North's policy wavering and irresolute.—Dexterous retreat to satisfy the supporters of coercion.—Mr. Burke's conciliatory plan, on the grounds of expediency—outlines and character—predicts civil and foreign war from the conduct of ministers.—rejected.—Mr. Hartley's conciliatory bill—rejected.—Ministers averse to all conciliatory overtures.—Bill for extending commercial prohibitions.—Loyalty of New-York province—representation from it to the commons—dismissed unheard.—Supplies.—Session closes.—War unavoidable.—Literary advocates for and against America.

WHILE the proceedings in and concerning America were so extremely important, they did not, in Britain, appear to attract the attention of the nation in proportion to their magnitude. There were, indeed, politicians and philosophers who saw them in their real aspect, and dreaded the consequences; but this view was far from being general; even merchants and manufacturers, to whom a rupture with the colonies would be so calamitous, seemed now lulled into equal security with the rest of their countrymen. This inattention arose from various causes. The contests with the colonies were no longer new, but from the year 1765 they had, with very few and short intermissions, been the chief subjects of parliamentary deliberation. To those who did not minutely and critically examine the new occurrences, and the change of sentiments which were now become so general in North America, most of the topics appeared exhausted; the various arguments for taxation had been often discussed, and on the triteness of the reasoning, great numbers overlooked the new effects which the system was producing. Confederacies against the importation of British commodities had before, and recently, been violated; and the present combinations would, many trusted, be equally short lived. Disputes had been frequently carried to the verge of a rupture, and had been afterwards accommodated; some means of conciliation, they flattered themselves, would be again devised. The Americans would tire of associations, that deprived them of the chief conveniences of life, which were rendered by habit almost necessary; besides, ministers and their adherents had very industriously spread an opinion, that vigorous measures, with perseverance, would soon finish a contest, which nothing but former indulgence had nou-

[Dissolution of parliament. General election.]

rished; and also, that the present administration possessed in an eminent degree the qualities requisite for honourably and advantageously terminating the dispute. Ministers, indeed, had afforded no satisfactory proofs either of their vigour or policy; but, as they had not, on the other hand, manifested either feebleness or folly, they and their friends represented the counsellors of his majesty as a body of very uncommon ability. A great part of the nation, with that unsuspecting credulity which frequently distinguishes a people otherwise so eminent for sound judgment, gave administration credit for all the talents and qualities for which they chose to take credit to themselves. For these reasons, it was not doubted that the coercive system which had been adopted and carried into execution under the direction of such men, would soon intimidate its objects from forcible resistance; but that, if it did not awe them to submission, their reduction would be speedy and certain; supported by the greater part of the country, the cabinet was the more able and determined to proceed with the plan of dictation which had commenced so strongly in the preceding session.

Parliament was now in its seventh year. In the reign of George II. it had generally lasted near the whole time; the first parliament of the present king had also continued seven full years. On the 30th of September, 1774, about six years and a half from the former election, a proclamation was issued for the dissolution of parliament, and the convocation of a new one, for which the writs were made returnable on the 9th of the following November. An abridgment contrary to recent custom excited great surprise among those who judged from precedent more than from present circumstances and expediency: but many reasons were assigned for this unusual measure; the most probable appears to be, that, as a new state of things had arisen in America, new councils might be requisite on the part of the legislature. On the one hand, should it be found necessary to deviate from the coercive system, the old parliament might be restrained by a sense of consistency from rescinding its own laws, while a new one would be more at liberty to act according to the exigency of the case. On the other hand, as at present, it was determined to persevere in coercion, and the majority of the people appeared to approve, it was probable that a parliament would be returned, favourable to the continuance of that system; and thus government would have an assurance of a long co-operation, of which it might be deprived by a change of circumstances and of public sentiment, were the election deferred till the succeeding year.

In London, the opposition party carried the election of all its candidates. In Middlesex, Mr. Wilkes, now lord-mayor elect, was chosen to represent the county; and ministers were not so imprudent as again to controvert a seat which had already given government so much disturbance. A considerable change of individual members took place through the nation; but it was soon found, that there was no alteration of political sentiment, and that a great majority supported the ministerial project of coercing America.

The subjects which were to occupy the deliberations of the new parliament, have rarely been equalled in importance in the legislative history of any age or country. On its counsels was to depend, whether by conciliation we should restore the reciprocally beneficial harmony that had so long subsisted between Britain and her colonies; or, by persistence

[Leading characters in the new parliament.]

in coercion, drive such valuable dependencies to a rebellion, which either would not be quelled, or, if crushed, could be reduced only by efforts which must exhaust the parent country, and destroy the provinces that she sought to render more productive and lucrative.

For examining such momentous questions, seldom has a national council contained a greater assemblage of ability, than the British parliament now exhibited. In the house of commons, among many men of considerable talents and extensive knowledge, there were ranged on the side of ministers, the financial information and accurate results of sir Grey Cooper; the perspicacious detail, solid judgment, and orderly arrangement of sir Gilbert Elliot; and the intrepid confidence and manly boldness of Mr. Rigby. In rising progression there followed the sound and vigorous understanding, the unremitting industry, the commercial, political, and diplomatic knowledge, the lucid disposition, the correct and perspicuous expression of Jenkinson; and the acuteness, closeness, and neat precision of Germaine. Dundas,* from his first entrance into public life, exhibited those qualities by which he has been uniformly distinguished; an understanding quick, sagacious, and powerful; reasoning forcible and direct, strictly adhering to the point at issue; an expeditious despatch of difficult business; and, regarding the senate as a council for the direction of national affairs more than a theatre for the display of eloquence, he was in his language intelligible and strong, without ornament or elegance. A mind by nature penetrating, brilliant, and inventive, formed and refined by erudition and by literary† society, sharpened and invigorated by professional occupations, and enlarged by political studies and pursuits; an eloquence that he could admirably vary to the occasion, and exhibit either in argumentative force, logical subtlety and skill, or with all the ornaments of rhetoric and the graces of persuasion, rendered Wedderburne a valuable accession to any cause which he chose to support.‡ For masculine energy of intellect, force devoid of ornament, and exhibiting itself in efforts direct, simple, and majestic, Thurlow stood eminent. Lord North was equally remarkable for pleasing and varied wit and humour, classical taste, erudition, and allusion, as for dexterity of argument and felicity of reply. On the other side were arrayed, the patriotism and solidity of Dempster and Saville; the industry and colonial information of Pownal; the colloquial pleasantry, vivacity, and classical erudition of Wilkes; the animated declamation of Barré; the quick apprehension, commercial and political knowledge of Johnstone; and the constitutional principles, legal precision, readiness, acuteness, and vigour, of Dunning. Above these, rose the extensive, accurate, and multifarious knowledge, the abundant and diversified imagery, the luminous illustration and rapid invention; the reasoning, dilated or compressed, digressive or direct, disjointed or continuous, which, if not always pointedly convincing, never failed to be generally instructive; the comprehensive views and philosophical eloquence, of a Burke. A senator was now rising to the first rank in the first assembly of the world,

* Lord advocate of Scotland.

† He was the intimate friend of Smith, Robertson, and Ferguson, and their contemporaries, in their early years; and cultivated an acquaintance with Burke, Johnson, and other eminent scholars, in his more advanced life.

‡ The judicial maxims and character of Wedderburne will appear in this and the succeeding volume.

[House of peers. Speech of the king.]

who must have held a very exalted situation in any convention of statesmen and orators recorded in history, this was Charles James Fox. In the twentieth year of his age he had become a member of parliament, and young as he was, distinguished himself among the many eminent members of the house, and was at first one of the ablest supporters of administration. The facility with which he made himself master of a new question, and comprehended with such force of judgment the strength, weakness, and tendency, of a proposition or measure; his powerful argumentation, his readiness of the most appropriate, significant, and energetic language, soon rendered him conspicuous; while his daily and obvious improvement showed that his talents had not then nearly reached the pinnacle at which they were destined to arrive. Since he joined opposition, his talents and exertions appeared more potent and formidable than even had been expected.*

In the house of peers, the chief supporters of administration were, lord Hillsborough, a nobleman of sound judgment and official experience; earl Gower, a peer of good character and extensive influence, who, in the minority of the duke, headed the Bedford party; and the earl of Sandwich, acute and intelligent as a senator, but a judicious speaker rather than a splendid orator. The only peer of transcendent genius who joined ministers in the coercive system, was lord Mansfield; a personage very eminently distinguished for abilities and erudition, and for argumentative, refined, and persuasive eloquence; but the fame of this illustrious senator was principally founded upon his oratorial and judicial powers and efforts,† and derived little accession from his counsels as a statesman. The most distinguished peers who were inimical to the coercive system, were the marquis of Rockingham, whom we have viewed as minister; the duke of Richmond, a nobleman of respectable abilities, active, indefatigable, and ardent; lord Shelburne, whom we have seen a secretary of state, distinguished for extent of general knowledge, and peculiarly marked for his extensive views of the reciprocal relations, commercial and political, of European states; lord Camden, the great bulwark of English law, profoundly versed in our constitution, with that mild, clear, and nervous eloquence, which is the firm and efficacious instrument of wisdom; and lastly, in himself a host, the earl of Chatham.

Surveying and examining the principal actors on the grand political theatre, the reader may perceive that, both for and against ministers, there was a constellation of abilities; but, in opposition, the highest talents, and the most approved wisdom.

On the 30th of November the new parliament met. His majesty's speech stated to the houses, that a daring spirit of resistance and disobedience to the laws still unhappily prevailed in the province of Massachusetts Bay, and had in divers parts of it broken forth in fresh violences of a criminal nature; but these proceedings had been countenanced and encouraged in others of the colonies, and unwarrantable attempts had been made to obstruct the commerce of this kingdom by unlawful combi-

* A part of this account is taken, with considerable variations, from the life of Burke, first edition, p. 210 to 218.

† The reader will find a character of this great man in the narrative of the year 1788; for the judicial part of which I am chiefly indebted to a gentleman of high eminence for literary and legal erudition.

[Character of the address. Protest in the house of lords.]

nations : such measures, however, had been employed, as were judged most effectual for carrying the acts of the preceding session into execution, protecting commerce, and restoring and preserving order and good government in the province of Massachusetts. It expressed his majesty's resolution to withstand every attempt to diminish the authority of parliament over the dominions of the crown ; the maintenance of which authority was necessary for the dignity and welfare of the British empire : it stated the satisfaction of the king at the restoration of complete tranquillity to Europe, by the peace between Russia and Turkey ; and concluded with recommending firmness and unanimity in parliamentary proceedings. Avowing the taxation of the colonies to be an essential right of the British legislature, and that the late acts must be executed, the speech* declared, that no regard was to be paid to the opinions and sentiments which had produced a confederation of the colonies, and that ministers were not moved by the proceedings in America to deviate from the plans of the former session. While the speech demonstrated the intentions of government, the address, carried by a great majority (though not without strenuous opposition,) manifested that the new, like the old parliament, was resolved to persist in taxing British subjects without their own consent ; establishing in some colonies, systems of polity different from the British constitution ; punishing those who had never been tried, and ordaining trials, different in principle and mode from those which are recognised by our laws ; it proved also, that the new parliament esteemed the representation of the colonists undeserving of regard. The address, indeed, sanctioned the general policy of ministers ; and the parliament, at the very commencement of its deliberative proceedings, unequivocally evinced its determination to tread in the steps of the former. The opposition speakers exhorted legislature TO INVESTIGATE FACTS BEFORE THEY PROCEEDED TO JUDGMENT ; and not to pledge themselves implicitly to follow the example of their predecessors, without fully examining the grounds on which they had acted, and the effects which their acts had produced and were producing. Having moved for a communication of all the intelligence that had been received by his majesty respecting America, and the motion being negatived, they affirmed, that as the ministers and former parliament had passed sentence without taking cognizance of the case, the present parliament was pursuing the same plan. They next proceeded to the consequences, as they had verified or falsified the predictions of ministers ; contended, that whereas his majesty's counsellors had prophesied that the proceedings respecting Boston would strike terror into America, they had really combined into one party all the colonists, though before divided and detached ; and that, instead of frightening them severally into submission, they had compelled them jointly to resistance. In the house of lords a very strong protest was made, which, after stating the evils of the ministerial system, added the following words : " it affords us a melancholy prospect of the disposition of the lords in the present parliament, *when we see the house, under the pressure of so severe and uniform an experience, again ready, without any inquiry, to countenance, if not to adopt, the spirit of the former fatal proceedings.*"

Viewing the conduct of ministry as to utility of object and justness

* See state papers, November 30, 1774.

[Indecision of ministers. Character and policy of lord North.]

of principle, the historical reader may probably have formed some judgment of the character of their policy; he has, in the immediately subsequent acts, a farther opportunity of estimating their qualifications by the means which they employed. To coerce America was the determination of ministry and the legislature. If coercion must be used, a stronger force, it was naturally expected, would be demanded, than that which was requisite in times of tranquillity; but when the supplies came under consideration, ministers proposed to diminish, instead of increasing, both sea and land forces; and required seventeen thousand troops, instead of eighteen thousand, and sixteen thousand seamen instead of twenty thousand. On this subject, opposition charged ministry with an intention of deluding the people to war, while they pretended to expect peace; but that the hostilities, which they deprecated as ruinous in themselves, would be rendered still more fatally destructive by defective preparation; there was (they said) either inadequacy of force to the end proposed, or feeble and paltry artifice to conceal obvious intentions.*

Ever since the debate on the address, great indecision had appeared in the conduct of the minister. He studiously avoided any farther discussion on American politics, and frequently absented himself from the house. From these circumstances it was conjectured, that he did not fully concur in the coercive system; and this hypothesis was by no means inconsistent with either his known disposition or abilities. It was presumed, that a man of such a conciliating temper, and whose first ministerial act† had been concession to appease the colonists, could really be no friend to violent and irritating measures; and that a statesman of his undoubted talents could not, from the dictates of his own understanding, devise or recommend such acts. Lord North, it was imagined, could not long be so completely deceived as to fact, and erroneous in argument, as the proposers of the ministerial measures appeared. Besides, it was supposed that his intellect was too enlightened, and his mind too liberal, to possess that contemptible obstinacy of character which is incident to men at the same time weak and vain, who adhere to a plan, not because it is proved to be right, but because they had once favoured its adoption.‡

* See the speeches of opposition, in Debrett's Parliamentary Debates in December 1774; especially of Mr. Fox, in a committee of supply.

† See the account of parliament 1770, vol. i.

‡ It has been very often asserted, and by many believed, that lord North originally was, and always continued in his private sentiments, inimical to the American war; although he, as prime minister, in every measure of carrying it on, incurred the chief responsibility. This opinion, as an historian, I have not documents either to confirm or refute with undoubted certainty. To those who would confine themselves to comparison of the plans and conduct of government during that awful period, with the talents often displayed by his lordship, the conjecture may appear probable. But persons who take a candid view of the respectable and estimable moral qualities of the prime minister, will hesitate in justifying his wisdom at the expense of his integrity; they will sooner admit that a man of genius, literature, and political knowledge, reasoned falsely and acted unwisely, than that a man of moral rectitude acted in deliberate and lasting opposition to his conscience, thereby involving his country in misfortune. At the same time, I am fully aware that there is a third hypothesis possible, and by many believed, if not by some known to be true. The opinion in question rather changes the situation than degrades the character of lord North, by representing him as merely his majesty's first commissioner of the treasury and chancellor of the exchequer, instead of the prime political counsellor. Persons of very considerable respectability, of very high veneration for the character of lord North, and who with invio-

Petitions from America dismissed without a hearing]

The theory of an interior cabinet was revived; and it was asserted, that lord North, though ostensibly minister, was really compelled to obey the dictates of a secret junto. Having, however, no satisfactory evidence that such a cabal existed, nor that an able and estimable nobleman submitted to such a disgraceful mancipation, I cannot record conjecture as a historical truth, and must narrate the measures proposed or adopted by lord North as his own, because for them he declared himself responsible.

Until the Christmas recess, the minister continued to abstain from giving any determinate opinion concerning American affairs. During the adjournment, the North American merchants of London and Bristol, having more deeply considered the consequences resulting to their trade, were seriously alarmed; as were also the manufacturers of Birmingham. Meetings were called, and petitions to parliament were prepared by these bodies, representing the great losses which they had sustained from the suspension of traffic, the immense sums due from America, and the ruin that must accrue to them unless intercourse should be speedily re-opened with the colonies. They were presented as soon as parliament met; and also petitions from various other bodies and parts of the kingdom. The West India merchants and planters stated how deeply they were concerned in this dispute, as the sugar islands not only drew a great part of their provisions from America, but were supplied with lumber from thence, for which they bartered their rum and sugars; so that an interruption of the intercourse between the British American continent and those islands, was likely not only to deprive the latter of the means of sending their produce to Europe, but to cause a great body of people to perish for want of sustenance. The various petitions were referred to a committee of the house; but from the little attention that was paid to them, it was called *the committee of oblivion*. The petition from the congress to the king had been transmitted to London; his majesty refused to receive it from a body of which he could not acknowledge the legality, but referred it to parliament. On the 26th of January, sir George Saville presented a petition to the house from three American agents praying to be heard on the subject of the petition presented by them from the congress to the king, and which his majesty had referred to the house. A hearing was refused by the commons on the same ground, that no attention could be paid to that petition without acknowledging the authority of the meeting.

The opponents of coercion now received a re-enforcement of genius, eloquence, and political wisdom, by the appearance of lord Chatham in the house of lords, after an absence of several years. That illustrious statesman, who had carried the prosperity and glory of his country to so exalted a pitch, now left the sick room, that he might try to avert the evils with which it was threatened, from the feeble, fluctuating, and erro-

lable fidelity adhered to him in every vicissitude of fortune, have given their opinion, that he was not really minister, but the official executor of positive commands. I am aware also, that in this assertion they are said to proceed, not merely on general inferences, but on specific evidence. From the nature of the ~~alleged~~ ^{alleged} ~~specimens~~, I know well that if they exist, they cannot at present be made public. If the truth of this account were established, we should, indeed, have to consider his lordship as officially obeying orders, but not as voluntarily proposing counsels; this perhaps, might excuse him as the servant of a master, but would not be sufficient to acquit him as member of a deliberative assembly. Even in this last view, palliations might be found to apologise to the indulgent, though it might be more difficult to discover facts and arguments which would satisfy the rigidly just.

[Lord Chatham returns to the house. His introductory speech.]

neous policy of his successors in administration. Lord Dartmouth, secretary of state for the American department, having laid sundry papers before the house relative to the state of affairs in America, lord Chatham moved an address to the king for recalling the troops from Boston. The speech that introduced the motion was replete with that forcible, brilliant, and impressive eloquence, which during forty years had delighted; instructed, and astonished parliament. "The Americans, (said he,) sore under injuries and irritated by wrongs, stript of their in-born rights and dearest privileges, have resisted oppression, and entered into confederacies for preserving their common liberties. Under this idea, the colonists have appointed men competent to so great an undertaking to consider and devise the most effectual means for maintaining so inestimable a blessing. Invested with this right by the choice of a free people, these delegates have deliberated with prudence, with wisdom, and with spirit; and, in consequence of these deliberations, have addressed the justice and the honour of their country. This is their fault, this is their crime; they have petitioned for that, without which a free people cannot possibly exist. Much has been said of late about the authority of parliament. Its acts are held up as sacred edicts demanding implicit submission, because, if the supreme power does not lodge somewhere operatively and effectively, there must be an end of all legislation. But they who thus argue, or rather dogmatize, do not see the whole of this question on great, wise and liberal grounds. In every free state, the constitution is fixed, and all legislative power and authority, wheresoever placed, either in collective bodies or individuals, must be derived under that established polity from which they are framed. Therefore, however strong and effective acts of legislation may be when they are formed in the spirit of this constitution, yet when they resist its principles, or counteract its provisions, they attack their own foundation; for it is the constitution, and the constitution only, which limits both sovereignty and allegiance. This doctrine is no temporary doctrine taken up on particular occasions to answer particular purposes, it is involved in no metaphysical doubts and intricacies, but clear, precise, and determinate: it is recorded in all our law books; it is written in the great volume of nature; it is the essential and unalterable right of Englishmen, and accords with all the principles of justice and civil policy, which neither armed force on the one side, nor submission on the other, can upon any occasion eradicate. Dreadful will be the effects of coercive measures. Government has sent an armed force of above seventeen thousand men to dragoon the Bostonians into what is called their duty. Ministers, so far from turning their eyes to the impolicy and dreadful consequences of this scheme, are constantly sending out more troops, and declaring, in the language of menace, that if seventeen thousand men cannot, fifty thousand shall enforce obedience. So powerful an army may ravage the country, and waste and destroy as they march; but in the progress of seventeen hundred miles, can they occupy the places that they have passed? Will not a country which can produce three millions of people, wronged and insulted as they are, start up like hydras in every corner, and gather fresh strength from fresh opposition?"* In this situation and prospect, he proposed that a petition should be presented to his majesty to recall the army from Boston, as the present position

* See parliamentary debates, January 20, 1775.

[His plan of conciliation.]

of the troops rendered them and the Americans continually liable to events which would prevent the possibility of re-establishing concord. This well-timed mark of affection and good will on our side, would remove all jealousy and apprehension on the other, and produce the happiest effects to both. If we consulted either our interest or our dignity, the first advances to peace should come from Britain. "If the ministers, on the contrary, persevere in their present measures, I will not (said he) assert that the king is betrayed, but I will pronounce that the kingdom is undone. I have crawled to tell you my opinion; I think it my duty to give the whole of my experience and counsel to my country at all times, but more particularly when it so much needs political guidance. Having thus entered on the threshold of this business, I will knock at your gates for justice, and never stop, unless infirmities should nail me to my bed, until I have at least employed every means in my power to heal those unhappy divisions. Every motive of equity and of policy, of dignity and of prudence, urges you to allay the ferment in America, by the removal of your troops from Boston, by a repeal of your acts of parliament, and by a demonstration of amicable dispositions toward your colonies. On the other hand, every danger impends to deter you from perseverance in your present ruinous measures. Foreign war hangs over your heads by a slight and brittle thread; France and Spain are watching your conduct, and waiting for the maturity of your errors." His present motion, lord Chatham said, he had formed for a solid, honourable, and lasting settlement between Britain and America. This first speech of his lordship on the ministerial project of America, dictated by comprehensive wisdom, operating on accurate and extensive political knowledge, made little impression on the majority of the house. The peers who supported administration expressed themselves in high and decisive language, they severely reprobated the conduct of the Americans, and asserted that all conciliatory means had proved ineffectual: it was high time (they said) for the mother country to assert her authority; concession in the present case would defeat its own object: the navigation act, and all other laws that form the great basis on which those advantages rest, and the true interests of both countries depend, would fall a victim to the interested and ambitious views of America. In a word, it was declared that the mother country should never relax till America confessed our supremacy; and it was avowed to be the ministerial resolution to enforce obedience by arms.

The motion was negatived by a great majority; but lord Chatham, not discouraged by the rejection of his introductory motion, persevered in prosecuting his scheme of conciliation: for which purpose he laid before the house the outlines of a bill, under the title of "A provincial act for settling the troubles in America, and for asserting the supreme legislative authority and superintending power of Great Britain over the colonies." It proposed to repeal all the statutes which had been passed in the former session relative to America; in which were included the Quebec act, and another law that regulated the quartering of soldiers: also to rescind eight acts of parliament, passed in the present reign from the fourth year to the twelfth. It proposed to restrain the powers of the admiralty and vice-admiralty courts in America within their ancient limits, and to establish the trial by jury in all such civil cases in which it had been lately abolished; the judges to hold their offices and salaries as in England, *quandtu se bene*

[Opposition to the plan. It is rejected by a great majority.]

gesserint. It declared the colonies in America to be justly entitled to the privileges, franchises, and immunities granted by their several charters or constitutions; and that such charters ought not to be invaded or resumed, unless for some legal grounds of forfeiture. But while his bill took these steps to satisfy the colonies, it vindicated the supremacy of Great Britain: expressed the dependence of America on the parent country;* asserted, as an undoubted prerogative, the king's right to send any part of the legal army to whatever station in his dominions he judged expedient for the public good, and condemned a passage in the petition of the general congress which questioned that right; on the other hand it declared, that no military force, however legally raised and kept, can ever be constitutionally employed to violate and destroy the just right of the people. His lordship, aware of the many and complicated materials of his bill, requested the assistance of the house to digest, and reduce them to the form best suited to the dignity and importance of the subject. He deprecated the effects of party or prejudice, factious spleen, or blind predilection. Though a superficial view might represent this as a bill of concession solely, just and accurate examination would discover it to be also a bill of assertion. This proposition underwent a great diversity of discussion: the variety and multiplicity of important objects comprised in it were alleged to be much too numerous for being the subject of one act; each of the objects deserved a separate consideration, and ought to be investigated with the most scrutinizing accuracy. The ministerial lords were indeed extremely violent in opposing the bill; they asserted, that it granted to the Americans whatever they wanted, without securing the rights of the British legislature. The colonists had manifested a rebellious and hostile disposition, and it would be grossly impolitic to make concessions to subjects who had shown a resolution to revolt. In their strictures on the bill, some ministerial lords, without regarding the character, age, and services of its illustrious author, indulged themselves in petulant personalities, which answered no other purpose than to rouse the generous indignation merited by that folly which wantonly provokes superior power. He again predicted, that so violent a system would drive America to a total separation from Great Britain: foreign rivals were regarding the proceedings of the British government with the most vigilant attention, and entertaining sanguine hopes of the reduction of our power, and the dismemberment of our empire,

* The colonies of America, it set forth, have been, are, and of right ought to be dependent upon the imperial crown of Great Britain, and subordinate to the British parliament; and that the king's most excellent majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the lords spiritual and temporal, and commons in parliament assembled, had, have, and of right ought to have full power and authority to make laws and statutes of sufficient force and validity to bind the people of the British colonies in America, in all matters touching the general weal of the whole dominions of the imperial crown of Great Britain, and beyond the competency of the local representatives of a distinct colony; and most especially, an indubitable and indispensable right to make and ordain laws for regulating navigation and trade throughout the complicated system of British commerce; the deep policy of such precedent acts upholding the guardian navy of the whole British empire; and that all subjects in the colonies are bound, in duty and allegiance, duly to recognize and obey (and they are hereby required so to do) the supreme legislative authority and superintending power of the parliament of Great Britain

[Opinions of ministry respecting America. Observations of Mr. Fox.]

through the incapacity and infatuation of our ministers; though cautiously forbearing interference, until by perseverance in our ruinous plan, the colonies were completely separated from the mother country. Such were the conclusions and predictions of consummate wisdom; but they were disregarded, and the propositions for terminating the dissensions between Britain and America were rejected by a great majority.

The house of commons breathed a spirit of coercion no less vehement than that of the house of peers. On the 3d of February, the minister moved an address to the king, declaring Massachusetts Bay to be in a state of rebellion, and detailing the acts from which he attempted to justify his assertion: they had been countenanced and encouraged by unlawful combinations in other colonies, to the injury and oppression of many of their innocent fellow-subjects resident within the kingdom of Great Britain and the rest of his majesty's dominions; and their conduct was more inexcusable, as the parliament of Britain had conducted itself with such moderation toward the Americans; but though ready to redress real grievances, dutifully and constitutionally submitted to parliament, they would not relinquish the sovereign authority which the legislature possessed over the colonies. The address besought his majesty to take the most effectual measures to enforce obedience; and assured him of the fixed resolution of the addressers, at the hazard of their lives and properties, to stand by his majesty, against all rebellious attempts, in the maintenance of his rights and those of the two houses of parliament. This was a very momentous motion, the fate of which, it was foreseen, must in a great measure determine whether there would or would not be a civil war; for were the provincials declared to be rebels, it was very probable that they would be hurried to actual revolt. The address met with strong opposition; Mr. Dunning endeavoured to prove that the Americans were not in rebellion, and supported his assertion by an appeal to legal definitions, which, he contended, did not apply to any of the acts in Massachusetts. The address to the sovereign contained a charge against fellow-subjects that was not true, and asked him to prosecute a crime which had not been committed. Mr. Thurlow, the attorney-general, affirmed, that the Americans were traitors and rebels, but did not prove his position from a comparison of their conduct with the treason laws. Ministerial members endeavoured to show that they were both rebels and cowards; colonel Grant, in particular, told the house, that he had often acted in the same service with the Americans; he knew them well, and from that knowledge would venture to predict, that they would never dare to face an English army, as being destitute of every requisite to constitute good soldiers; by their laziness, uncleanness, or radical defect of constitution, they were incapable of going through the service of a campaign, and would melt away with sickness before they could face an enemy; so that a very slight force would be more than sufficient for their complete reduction. Many ludicrous stories were told of their cowardice, greatly to the entertainment of the ministerial members, who were all confident that America would make a short and feeble resistance. Mr. Fox most eminently distinguished himself, not only by the force of his reasoning and eloquence, but

[Massachusetts Bay declared to be in a state of rebellion.]

by the depth of his sagacity, which with a prophetic accuracy marked the consequences of the proposed measure. It would create the rebellion, which now, without grounds, was declared to exist. The ministerial inferences respecting the cowardice of the Americans were founded upon false and futile premises, and rested on the reports of officers who had served with them in the war against the French. The provincials had certainly not behaved with that uniform valour which was displayed by the regular troops, but then they considered themselves as auxiliaries, not as principals. The military operations were to promote the success of the British empire; whereas, if now driven to war, they were to fight, according to their conception, for their own liberty and property, against usurpation and tyranny. Those persons must have attended little to the passions, and the history of human conduct, who concluded, that because men were not always disposed to fight valiantly for others, they therefore would not fight valiantly for themselves. "Peruse (said Mr. Fox) the history of contests for freedom; you will find that every people inspired with manly virtue enough to value and desire liberty, has always displayed energy and courage in asserting their right to so inestimable a blessing: the Americans will fight when inspired by so powerful a motive." He concluded with moving an amendment, to leave out all but the preliminary words of the address, and to substitute after them the following: "But deploring that the information which they (the papers laid before the house) had afforded, served only to convince the house that the measures taken by his majesty's servants tended rather to widen than to heal the unhappy differences between Great Britain and America." The arguments and exertions of that extraordinary senator were of little avail; the proposed address was carried by a great majority, and was equally successful in the house of peers. Eighteen lords entered into a protest against a measure, which they affirmed to amount to a declaration of war: the hostile manifesto was not, they asserted, justified by evidence; the acts of parliament affecting Massachusetts Bay were real grievances; and those continuing unrepealed, the Americans had no reason to confide in general assurances of redress; we had refused to listen to their petitions; we would receive no information but from one side; we punished without inquiry, and branded with the name of rebels those who remonstrated against such unjust and illegal punishment. The dissentients further objected to the address, that the means of enforcing the authority of the British legislature was confined to persons whose capacity for that purpose was doubtful, and who had hitherto employed no effectual measures for conciliating or reducing the opposers of that authority. This protest, which is, in fact, a deprecation of the war from which Britain has since suffered so much calamity, concluded with the following words: "Parliament has never refused any of their [the ministers] proposals, and yet our affairs have proceeded daily from bad to worse, until we have been brought, step by step, to that state of confusion, and even civil violence, which was the natural result of such desperate measures. We therefore protest against an address amounting to a declaration of war, which is founded on no proper parliamentary information, which was introduced by refusing to suffer the presentation of petitions against it (although it be the undoubted right of the subject to present the same,) which followed the rejection, of every mode of conciliation, which holds out no substantial offer of redress of griev-

[Message of the king. Bill restraining the commerce of the colonies.]

ances, and which promises support to those ministers who have inflamed America, and grossly misconducted the affairs of Great Britain.”*

In consequence of this address, his majesty sent a message to the house of commons, intimating his resolution, in compliance with the wishes of his parliament, to take the most speedy and effectual measures for supporting the just rights of the crown and legislature, and that some augmentation of his forces by sea and land would be necessary for this purpose. Accordingly, an increase both of the army and navy was voted: and reason was given to expect, that a greater number would be required in the course of the session. Opposition insisted, that the ministerial mode of sending small bodies to America was totally inadequate to the purposes of the coercion which they so madly sought; their violent counsels would drive the Americans to revolt, while their feeble and tardy preparations would be ineffectual to the suppression of the disturbances. Ministers, in discussing this as well as other questions, formed their conclusions on a presumption that the Americans were cowards; and continued to express the certainty of reducing all the other colonies to obedience, by merely commencing military operations in Massachusetts Bay. While ministers were proceeding in preparing to compel obedience by means of a military force, they endeavoured to promote the same by other means. With this view it was resolved, until they should become submissive, to withhold from them one of their chief sources of subsistence.

The northern provinces had derived essential benefits from the Newfoundland fisheries. In a country not very productive in corn, a great part of the livelihood of the poor was drawn from the ocean; numbers of the inhabitants were fishermen, and had no other means of purchasing flour and other necessities of life, but from the proceeds of that occupation. Their fisheries were, moreover, the means of sustaining a race of seamen; they were allowed to carry their cargoes to any port south of cape Finisterre, and were accustomed to supply Spain and Portugal with fish during the season of Lent. The minister thought that, by debarring them from seeking so material an article of their food where it was most likely to be found, he should at length bring them to that compliance which his other schemes had successively failed to produce. He therefore, on the 10th of February, moved for leave to bring in a bill to restrain the trade and commerce of the provinces of Massachusetts Bay and New-Hampshire, the colonies of Connecticut and Rhode Island, and Providence Plantation, in North America, to Great Britain, Ireland, and the British islands in the West Indies; and to prohibit such provinces and colonies from carrying on any fishery on the banks of Newfoundland, or other places therein to be mentioned, under certain conditions, and for a limited time. In support of the proposed bill, plausible arguments were adduced: the Americans had refused to trade with this kingdom, it was therefore just that we should not suffer them to trade with any other country; the restraints of the act of navigation were their charter; and the several permissions to deviate from that law, were so many acts of grace and favour, all of which, when they ceased to be merited by the colonies, ought to be revoked by the legislature. The fisheries on the banks of Newfoundland, as well as all others in

* Debrett's Parliamentary Papers, vol. iii. p. 516—518.

[Petitions against the bill. Protest of the peers.]

North America, were the undoubted right of Great Britain, and she might accordingly dispose of them as she pleased; as both houses had declared Massachusetts Bay to be in a state of rebellion, it was but just and reasonable to deprive it of a benefit which it before enjoyed only by indulgence. The bill, its framer proposed, should be only temporary; and particular persons might be excepted, should they obtain certificates from the governor of their province that their behaviour was loyal and peaceable, or should they subscribe a test acknowledging the supremacy of parliament. It was proper to include the other colonies in the prohibitions imposed upon Massachusetts; New-Hampshire, Connecticut, and Rhode-Island, bordered on that province; and, unless the privation extended to them, the purposes of the act would be defeated: besides, though the people had not broken out in actual violence, they had manifested a disposition to assist the Bostonians. The bill was very strongly opposed: its principle was alleged to involve the innocent with the guilty; to impoverish and starve four provinces, because one was asserted to be in a state of rebellion. Its impugners did not admit the doctrine of its supporters, that the vicinity of one province to another actually in rebellion, is a just reason for including the inhabitants of the tranquil province in the punishment. It was, besides, cruel to deprive poor wretches of their hard-earned livelihood, and the exception of those whom the governor might think proper to favour, would only introduce a scandalous partiality, and pernicious monopoly; but the plan was inexpedient as well as unjust, and would be extremely hurtful to the merchants of Britain. New-England owed them a great balance, and had no other means of discharging the debt than through the fishery, and the trade which it circuitously produced; the fisheries would be lost to us, and transferred to our rivals; the inhabitants of the coasts, to prevent themselves from starving, must have recourse to other occupations, and, were the provinces driven to war, would become soldiers. Thus we provoked rebellion by one set of unjust acts, and recruited the rebellious army by another. Various petitions were presented by merchants trading to America, stating the evils of the bill even to our own fisheries, as well as to commerce in general. The expostulations, however, produced no effect, and the bill was passed by a great majority in both houses.* A protest in the house of peers, after detailing the various objections to the principles and provisions of this measure, contains the following very striking remark on the conduct of ministry: "That government which attempts to preserve its authority by destroying the trade of its subjects, and by involving the innocent and the guilty in one common ruin, if it act from a choice of such means, confesses itself unworthy; if from inability to find any other, admits itself wholly incompetent to the end of its institution."

* It was on the discussion of this question, Gibbon informs us, that Mr. Fox first manifested to parliament the extraordinary force and extent of his talents. "The principal men, both days, were Fox and Wedderburne, on the opposite sides; the latter displayed his usual talents: the former, taking the vast compass of the question before us, discovered powers for regular debate, which neither his friends hoped, nor his enemies dreaded." See Gibbon's letter to lord Sheffield, 1775.

[Plan of lord North for conciliating America.]

While administration appeared bent on pursuing the most coercive measures, lord North proposed a law, which being professedly conciliatory, astonished not only opposition, but many of the adherents of ministers. The bill, however, was founded on a position implied in the address, "that there was a great want of unanimity in the colonies." On that principle it had been declared, that, "whenever any of the colonies shall make a proper application to us, we shall be ready to afford them every just and reasonable indulgence." He therefore proposed, that when any of the colonies should proffer, according to their abilities, to raise their due proportion towards the common defense (the assessment to be raised under the authority of the assembly of the province, and to be disposable by parliament,) and when such colony should also engage to provide for the support of its civil government and the administration of justice, parliament should forbear the exaction of duties or taxes, except such as should be necessary for the regulation of trade. It was frequently the fate of lord North's measures, both deliberative and executive, to be proposed too late for answering an end which they might have attained had they been sooner proposed. It has been already remarked, that during many years there was a great diversity of sentiment in the several colonies concerning principles of government, and other subjects connected with their relation to the mother country; and that it might have been easy for the minister, by attending minutely to their different views and opinions, to have so effectually kept their interests separate, as to prevent any coalition. But the plans which he had lately pursued, had served to unite in one mass materials before discordant: from diversity, government had driven them to uniformity of views. This scheme of compromise might, and probably would, have been received by the middle and southern colonies, from lord North, at the beginning of his administration, and its reception by them must have compelled the northern republicans at length to accede: but the season was past. The minister, on introducing his motion, made a speech, in which he demonstrated that he considered his present plan as a deviation from the high system of coercion which he had before inculcated. He quoted a variety of instances from the history of this country, of ministers and parliaments altering their opinions in a change of circumstances: the present system, he urged, would be a touchstone to try the sincerity of the Americans; if their opposition was founded on the principles which they pretended, they would comply with the terms; if they should refuse them, they must have been actuated by different motives from those which they professed. "We (said he) shall then be prepared, and know how to act; after having shown our wisdom, our justice, and our humanity, by giving them an opportunity of redeeming their past faults, and holding out to them fitting terms of accommodation, if they reject them, we shall be justified in taking the most coercive measures, and they must be answerable to God and man for the consequences." This measure appeared a concession to the colonies, and met with its first opposition from gentlemen who usually supported government. It was by some ministerial members opposed, as contrary to the principles both of the late address and other acts of government. These objections were pressed with the greatest ardour by Mr. Dundas, and also the partisans of the Bedford interest; the former, in whatever he undertook

[Arguments of opposition. Mr. Fox displays its inconsistency.]

preferred firmness and decision, and disliked the present plan as wavering and indecisive; the latter, who had uniformly been the abettors of coercion, reprobated every indication of a conciliatory spirit. The disapprobation of persons on whose coincidence he had relied, embarrassed and distressed the minister, and he repeatedly endeavoured to explain himself, but without giving satisfaction. At length, sir Gilbert Elliott professed to reconcile the apparent deviation, and for that purpose observed that the address contained two correspondent* lines of conduct; on the one hand, to repress rebellion, protect loyalty, and enforce the laws; on the other, to grant indulgence to colonists who should return to their duty. For the first of these purposes, the forces had been augmented, and the prohibitory system adopted: for the last, the present plan was proposed, and without it the restrictive act would have been defective and unjust. By this proposition, parliament would not lose the right of imposing taxes; that was a power which it expressly reserved, neither did it suspend its exercise; it manifested the firm resolution of the legislature to compel America to provide what we (not they) thought just and reasonable for the support of the empire. Their compliance was the only ground of their hope to be reconciled to this country. **REVENUE WAS THE SUBJECT OF DISPUTE**: if the Americans offered a satisfactory contribution, their past offences would be pardoned, and if they did not, we should compel them to do us justice. Members who had disliked this motion, under the idea that it was not coercive, now became more favourable. The opponents of ministry contended, that the measure was invidious: "It carries (said they) two faces on its very first appearance: to the Americans, and to those who are unwilling to proceed in the extremes of violence against them, the minister holds out negotiation and amity: to those who have joined him, on condition (said Mr. Fox†) that he will support the supremacy of this country, the proposition holds out a determination to persevere in pursuit of that object. But his friends see that he is relaxing, and the committee sees that they are all ready to withdraw from under his standard. No one in this country, who is sincerely the advocate of peace, will trust the speciousness of his expressions, and the Americans will reject them with disdain. This proposition, so far from tending to disunite, would unite the Americans more closely: they would guard against artifice, as well as defend themselves against force. The minister is contradictory to himself in his professions of conciliation, and very short-sighted in conceiving that they would impose on the Americans."

The plan was evidently only a change of the mode, not a renunciation of the right, of levying taxes; it was a half measure, an at-

* This refined distinction did not prevent discerning supporters of lord North's administration from regarding such very opposite measures in the true light, as the reader may observe in the following extract from Gibbon, written upon this occasion. "We go on with regard to America, if we can be said to go on; for last Monday a conciliatory motion of allowing the colonies to tax themselves, was introduced by lord North, in the midst of lives and fortunes, war and famine. We went into the house in confusion, every moment expecting that the Bedfords would fly into rebellion against those measures. Lord North rose six times to appease the storm, but all in vain; till at length sir Gilbert declared for administration, and the troops all rallied under their proper standard." Gibbon's letter to lord Sheffield, Feb. 25th, 1775.

† See parliamentary debates, February 20th, 1775.

[Wavering policy of Lord North. Propositions of Mr. Burke.]

tempt to compromise the difference, when it was plain, from the very beginning, that there was no medium between coercion and abandonment. If the ministry were before right, they conceded by far too much, if wrong by far too little. Lord North was too anxious to please one party, without much displeasing the other; there was a fluctuation of counsels, a mixture of soothing and irritating measures, which reciprocally defeated the effect of each other. With abilities that fitted him for being a leader, from want of firmness he was too often a follower of men who were much inferior to himself. While this bill was the subject of discussion, he displayed more dexterity in retreating, than boldness in maintaining his post. His conciliatory plan having undergone such modifications as made a considerable change in its principle and tendency, passed the house by a majority not altogether so great as those which had voted for other propositions of ministers.

Mr. Burke, having devoted a great part of his time and attention to inquiries into the state of America, and having concluded that an attempt to subjugate the colonists would be impracticable, persisted in recommending conciliation. On the 28th of March, 1775, he proposed to the house a plan for the re-establishment of concord. He forbore entering into the question of right, but confined himself to the consideration of expediency; and proceeded upon a principle admitted by the wisest legislators, that government must be adapted to the nature and situation of the people for whose benefit it is exercised. He therefore investigated the circumstances, modes of thinking, dispositions and principles of action, of those men in particular, the treatment of whom was the object of deliberation. To ascertain the propriety of concession, he examined and explained the internal and external state, with the natural and accidental circumstances of the colonies. He considered them with respect to situation and resources, extent, numbers, amazing growth of population, rapid increase of commerce, fisheries and agriculture; from which he evinced their strength and importance. He then inquired into that unconquerable spirit of freedom by which the Americans are distinguished. This violent passion for liberty, he traced from the sources of descent, education, manners, religious principles, and forms of government. He described the prosperity of America, so rapidly increased in the course of the century, and deduced from its advances, on the one hand, the benefits which had accrued, and would accrue in a still greater degree to this country, if our ancient amity were restored; on the other, their power of resistance, if we should persevere in our determination to employ force. The American spirit of liberty (he said) so predominating from a variety of causes, must be treated in one of three ways. It must either be changed, as inconvenient; prosecuted, as criminal; or complied with, as necessary. One means of changing the spirit was, by taking measures to stop that spreading population, so alarming to the country; but attempts of this sort would be totally impracticable, and even if they were not, would diminish the benefit which rendered the colonies valuable to the mother country. To impoverish the colonies in general, and especially to arrest the noble course of their maritime enterprises, was a project that might be compassed; but we had colonies for no other purpose than to be serviceable to us; it seemed therefore preposterous to render

[Foundation of his propositions. They are rejected by the house.]

them unserviceable, in order to keep them obedient. The second mode of breaking the stubborn spirit of the Americans, by prosecuting it as criminal, was impossible in the execution, and consequently absurd in the attempt. Perseverance in the endeavour to subjugate a numerous and powerful people, fighting for what they conceived to be their liberty, would diminish our trade, exhaust our resources, and impair our strength, without making any effectual impression upon America. From the contest with the colonies, there would also ensue a rupture with European powers, and a general war. After endeavouring to demonstrate the policy of concession, he proceeded to the principle on which he proposed that the concession should be made. His propositions (he said) were founded on the ancient constitutional policy of this kingdom respecting representation; they merely followed the guidance of experience. In the cases of Wales, the county palatine, Chester, and Durham, their utility to this country was coeval with their admission to a participation of the British constitution: our constitutional treatment of America had caused the benefits which we had derived from that country. Before 1763, we had walked with security, advantage and honour; since that time, discontent and trouble had prevailed. "I do not (said he) examine the abstract question of right; I do not inquire whether you have a right to render your people miserable; but, whether it is not your interest to make them happy. It is not what a lawyer tells me, I may do; but what humanity, reason, and justice, tell me, that I ought to do. By your old mode of treating the colonies, they were well affected to you, and you derived from them immense and rapidly increasing advantage; by your new mode, they are ill affected to you, and you have obstructed and prevented the emolument. I recommend to you to return from the measures by which you now lose, to those by which you formerly gained." From these arguments Mr. Burke formed his pacific propositions:* that the

* He moved thirteen resolutions; of which the six first contained his general principles and plan: 1st, He moved, That the colonies and plantations of Great Britain in North America, consisting of fourteen separate governments, and containing two millions and upwards of free inhabitants, have not had the liberty and privilege of electing and sending any knights and burgesses or others, to represent them in the high court of parliament. 2dly, That the said colonies and plantations had been made liable to, and bounded by, several subsidies, payments, rates, and taxes, given and granted by parliament, though the said colonies and plantations have not their knights and burgesses in the said high court of parliament of their own election; to represent the condition of their country; by lack whereof, they had been touched and grieved by subsidies given, granted, and assented to in the said court, in a manner prejudicial to the commonwealth, quietness, rest, and peace, of the subjects inhabiting within the same. 3dly, That from the distance of the said colonies, and from other circumstances, no method hath hitherto been devised for procuring a representation in parliament for the said colonies. 4thly, That each of the said colonies hath within itself a body chosen, in part or in whole, by the freemen, freeholders, or other free inhabitants thereof, commonly called the general assembly, or general court, with powers legally to raise, levy, and assess, according to the several usages of such colonies, duties and taxes towards defraying all sorts of public services. 5thly, That the said general assemblies, general courts, or other bodies legally qualified as aforesaid, have at sundry times freely granted several large subsidies and public aids for his majesty's service, according to their abilities, when required thereto by letter from one of his majesty's principal secretaries of state; and that their right to grant the same, and their cheerfulness and sufficiency in the said grants,

[Extension of the prohibitory system. Loyalty of New-York.]

Americans should tax themselves by their own representatives, in their own assemblies, agreeable to the former usage, and to the analogy of the British constitution; and that all acts imposing duties should be repealed. Though a speech more replete with wisdom was, perhaps, never spoken in that or any other assembly, yet wisdom was unavailing, and the conciliatory plan was rejected by men determined on compulsory measures.

Mr. Hartley soon after proposed a scheme of reconciliation, intended as a medium between the systems of lord North and Mr. Burke. His plan was, that, at the desire of parliament, the secretary of state should require the several colonies to contribute to the general expense of the empire, but leave the amount and application to the contributors themselves. Thus, on the one hand, requisition of revenue would originate with parliament: on the other, colonists would not be taxed without their own consent. The arguments so often repeated in favour of conciliation and of coercion, were employed by opposition and ministry; and, as before, reason was overborne by numbers.

The minister now introduced a second restraining bill, for extending the prohibitions of the first to all the remaining colonies, except New-York; which, after undergoing a similar discussion as the other, was passed into a law. Various petitions were presented to his majesty, praying for the adoption of new measures respecting America; but of these, the most remarkable was the petition of the city of London, presented to the king by the hands of Mr. Wilkes the lord-mayor. In the usual style of the addresses of the city for several years, this paper was rather a remonstrance than a petition: it justified the resistance of America, as founded upon constitutional principles; asserted that the colonies were driven to it by the corruption and tyranny of the British government; that the conduct of Britain towards America was totally opposite to the principles which had produced the revolution, and the accession of the house of Brunswick; and that it would be fatal to the commerce, prosperity, peace, and welfare of this country. His majesty expressed particular resentment at both the matter and the manner of this expostulation. A petition was about the same time presented to the house of peers from the British inhabitants of the province of Quebec, praying the favourable interposition of their lordships, as the hereditary guardians of the rights of the people, that the act might be repealed or amended, and that the petitioners might enjoy their constitutional rights, privileges, and franchises. Lord Camden moved a repeal of the act, on the same grounds that it had been opposed in the former year; but the motion was negatived: and a similar petition presented to the house of commons, met with a similar fate.

The province of New-York was very opposite in habits and sentiments to its neighbours of New-England: as distinguished for love of gaiety and pleasure, as the New-Englanders were for austerity and

have been at sundry times acknowledged by parliament. 6thly, That it hath been found by experience, that the manner of granting the said supplies and aids by the said general assemblies, hath been more agreeable to the inhabitants of the said colonies, and more beneficial and conducive to the public service, than the mode of giving and granting aids and subsidies, in parliament, to be raised and paid in the said colonies.

[Representation to parliament. Supplies. Session closes]

puritanical zeal; and as much attached to monarchy, as the others were devoted to republicanism. They had been uniformly more moderate than any of either the middle or southern colonies; in their provincial assembly, they refused to acknowledge the congress, and declared their resolution of continuing united to Great Britain; they did not, however, profess unconstitutional submission, but stated the grounds on which they were willing to continue in allegiance. In their statement, they included various grievances; drew up a representation of their sentiments and wishes, comprehending an entreaty for the redress of the evils which they alleged to exist, and transmitted it to their agent Mr. Burke, desiring him to present it to the house of commons. In introducing this paper to the house, Mr. Burke expatiated on the favourable disposition of the province of New-York. In the midst of all the violence which overspread the continent, that colony had preserved her legislature and government entire; and when every thing elsewhere was tending to a civil war, she dutifully submitted her complaints to the justice and clemency of the mother country. Their direct application to the house afforded a fair opportunity for terminating differences. New-York was a central province, which could break the communication between the northern and southern colonies; and, by having that country in our favour, we might be able to coerce the rest. He proposed, therefore, that the remonstrance should be read. Ministers contended, that the form of the address rendered its admission inconsistent with the honour and dignity of the British parliament; for it avoided the name of a petition, lest it should imply obedience to the legislature: the representation was therefore dismissed unheard.

Parliament this session came to a resolution of settling Buckingham-house on the queen, instead of Somerset-house, and vesting the latter building in his majesty for the purpose of erecting certain public offices. The last business which occupied the session of 1775 was finance. The amount of the supplies for the year was 4,307,450*l.* and a million of three per cent. annuities was paid off at 88 per cent.; 1,205,000*l.* exchequer bills were discharged, and new ones to an equal amount issued. When the money bills received the royal assent, the speaker addressed his majesty, adverting to the heaviness of the grants, which nothing but the particular exigencies of the times could justify in a season of peace: but, assuring the king, that if the Americans persisted in their resistance, the commons will use every effort to maintain and support the supremacy of the legislature. On the 26th of May, his majesty closed the session with his speech, in which he expressed the greatest satisfaction with their conduct. He declared his conviction, that the conciliatory propositions would have the desired effect in bringing back the Americans to a sense of their duty; he informed parliament, that he had received satisfactory assurances from the neighbouring powers, of their amicable dispositions; and particularly thanked the houses for the mark of their attachment lately shown to the queen. Thus closed a session of parliament, in which, notwithstanding the ablest efforts to effect conciliation, a great majority, bent upon coercion, adopted such measures as rendered a war unavoidable between Britain and her colonies.

While the American contest occupied the chief attention of parliament, it was also the principal subject of political literature. Three

[Part taken by literary men. Burke, Johnson, Tucker.]

systems of conduct were proposed by writers on our disputes with the colonies : conciliation, supported by many able authors, at the head of whom was Mr. Burke ; coercion, supported by a great number of writers, with a smaller aggregate of ability, at the head of whom was a man of no less eminent talents, doctor Samuel Johnson ; the third system was that of Dean Tucker, who proposed entirely to relinquish America, in which that gentleman stood alone. His scheme was ridiculed at the time by both parties ; but it now appears that even a total separation would have been more fortunate for us without hostilities, than a plan of coercion, which, after a long and expensive war, was to end with that separation : the event has justified the anticipation of Dean Tucker's sagacity. The productions of Mr. Burke on these subjects exhibit to the historical reader, a clear and complete view of what had been our policy towards America, and what had been the consequences ; what then was our policy, and what then were the actual and probable consequences. They also present to the political philosopher, perspicuous and forcible reasoning upon the system which government had adopted. Doctor Johnson's essay, manifestly as it demonstrated the metaphysical ingenuity of its author, afforded little light on the merits of the question. It is a chain of reasoning upon an assumption : the first position asserts as an axiom, the very principle to be proved, the supremacy of parliament ; it attempts to dazzle the understanding, by representing analogies between subjects totally dissimilar.* In politics, indeed, its author adhered too much to generalities to be practically beneficial ; and with the most powerful mind, habituated to abstraction, he, on the question of taxation reasoned rather as an acute schoolman, than as an able statesman. He did not enter into that particular consideration of the actual cases, which he employed with such powerful and happy effect in his critical and moral writings. While Mr. Burke and other authors supported the cause of the Americans on constitutional principles, and the wisdom of doctor Johnson could not prevent his peculiar prejudices from operating in impugning the claims of the Americans on very high tory principles ; literary advocates arose in their favour, who fell into the opposite extreme. Doctors Priestley and Price, dissenting ministers of very great ability and eminence, refining on the speculations of the

* In order to ridicule the resistance of America, Johnson supposes Cornwall to resolve to separate itself from the rest of England, and to refuse to submit to an English parliament : holding a congress at Truro, and publishing resolutions similar to those of the Americans. "Would not (he says) such a declaration appear to proceed from insanity ?"—The cases are not analogous : Cornwall is fully represented in parliament ; consequently, could not have the same reason for resisting our legislature : but if we were to suppose parliament absurd and wicked enough to make laws depriving Cornwall, without any demerit, of the most valuable privileges of Britons, the Cornishmen would have a right to resist that act, because oppressive, unconstitutional, and unjust. As to the expediency of exerting the right of resistance, the case would be very different between Cornwall and America ; Cornwall being both much weaker and much nearer than the colonies. It is difficult to conceive that the wisdom of Johnson could have intended the exhibition of this fanciful analogy to impress reasoning men. In the whole of the work, however, he shows, that he considered the subjugation of America, if it persevered in resistance, as certain. With many estimable and admirable qualities, by no means as a man entertaining a just value for freedom, he did not as a philosopher ascribe to it its real effects ; he did not reflect on the energetic spirit which inspires men fighting for what either is, or they think to be, their liberties.

[Visionary doctrines of Priestley and others.]

illustrious Locke, formed theories of civil and religious liberty totally incapable of being reduced to practice in any society of human beings, as far as experience ascertains to us the qualities and capacities of man; and tending, by holding up fanciful models of polity, to render the votaries of these writers dissatisfied with the existing establishments. Thus the opposition to the plans respecting America, though hitherto defensible on constitutional grounds, gave rise to discussions productive of visionary and dangerous doctrines, which eventually promoted very unconstitutional conduct.

CHAP. XV.

Critical state of affairs in America—general enthusiasm guided by prudence.—The provincials learn the reception of their petitions, and the measures of the new parliament.—Warlike preparations—general Gage attempts to seize stores—detachment sent to Concord—to Lexington—first hostile conflict between Britain and the colonies—British retire—an American army raised—second meeting of congress—spirit of republicanism—New-York accedes to the confederacy.—War—attempt on Ticonderoga—the Americans invest Boston—battle of Bunker's hill—Americans not cowards, as represented—provincials elated with the event—block up Boston—project an expedition into Canada—political and military reasons.—Washington commander-in-chief.—Montgomery heads the army sent to Canada—progress on the lakes—neglected state of the British forts—enters Canada—captures Montreal—march of Arnold across the country—arrives opposite to Quebec—junction with Montgomery—siege of Quebec.—General Carleton's dispositions for its defence—attempts to storm it—Montgomery killed—siege raised.—Proceedings in the south—of lord Dunmore in Virginia.—Scheme for exciting negroes to massacre their masters—Connelly's project.—Maryland—Carolinas.—Farther proceedings of congress.—Result of 1775.

IN America, affairs were becoming every day more critical : provincial differences were giving way to common confederation, the resolutions of the congress became the political creed, and the people were preparing to act according to the directions of that body, and zeal and unanimity were generally prevalent among the colonists. Town and provincial meetings, colonial assemblies, grand juries, judges, and even private parties, all spoke the same language, and breathed the same spirit: "we will not be taxed, but by our own consent; we will not receive the merchandise of that country which proposes such injustice; we will combine in defending our property, and resisting oppression." Accustomed to the gratifications derived from imported luxuries, the inhabitants of this rich and great commercial country resolutely relinquished all those indulgences: the pleasures of the table, elegance of dress, splendour of furniture, public diversions, the conveniences, ornaments, and relaxations of life, were sacrificed to one general sympathy; all ranks were inspired with an enthusiasm, which, from whatever cause it arises, and to whatever objects it is directed, never fails to be most powerful in its operation, and important in its effects. The merchant resigned the advantages of commerce; the farmer gave up the sale of his productions and the benefits of his industry; the mechanic, the manufacturer, the sailor, submitted to the privation of their usual means of subsistence, and trusted for a livelihood to the donations of the opulent, which, from the same sympathetic feelings, and conformity of opinions and determinations, were most liberally bestowed. It was not temperance that rejected luxury; it was not indolence that precluded commercial enterprise and professional effort; it was not generosity which made the rich munificent; or idleness or servility which made the poor seek subsistence from the gifts of the wealthy. All ordinary springs of action were absorbed by the love of liberty; and

[Effects of the parliamentary proceedings in America.]

the enthusiastic ardour of the colonists was regulated and guided by prudence and firmness. While in most of the provinces they made preparations for hostility, should Britain persevere in coercive measures, they abstained from actual violence. It was hoped by many, that the petition of congress to the throne would be attended with success; and also, that the address to the people of England would be productive of useful effects, and influence the deliberations of the new parliament. They did not, however, intermit their attention to warlike affairs; they exercised and trained the militia; and, as soon as advice was received of the proclamation issued in England to prevent the exportation of arms and ammunition to America, measures were speedily taken to remedy the defect. For this purpose, and to render themselves as independent as possible on foreigners for the supply of these essential articles, mills were erected, and manufactories formed, both at Philadelphia and Virginia,* for making gunpowder, and encouragement was given in all the colonies to the fabrication of arms. It was in the northern provinces that hostilities commenced: when the proclamation concerning warlike stores was known in Rhode-Island, the populace rising, seized on all the ordnance belonging to the crown in that province, amounting to forty pieces of cannon, which had been placed on batteries for defending the harbour, and these they removed into the country. Inquiry having been made by the governor concerning this procedure, the provincials did not hesitate to avow that their object was to prevent the cannon from falling into the hands of his majesty's forces, and that they intended to employ them against any power which should attempt molestation. The assembly of the province also passed resolutions for procuring arms and military stores, by every means and from every quarter in which they could be obtained, as well as for training and arming the inhabitants. In New-Hampshire, hitherto moderate, the proclamation caused an insurrection; a great number of armed men assembled, and, surprising a small fort called William and Mary, took possession of the ordnance and other military stores. Meanwhile the colonies anxiously waited for the king's speech, and the addresses of the new parliament; the tenour of which would in a great degree determine whether the British government meant coercion or conciliation. On the arrival of those papers, they produced the very effect which opposition had predicted. Instead of intimidating the Americans, they impelled them to greater firmness, to a more close and general union. In proportion as government manifested itself earnest to force them to submission, the more resolved were they to resist that force: they considered Britain as attacking their rights and liberties, and these they determined to defend. The provincial conventions of the southern provinces now imitated those of the north, in passing resolutions for warlike preparations; which, before the arrival of the speech and addresses, had not been proposed by any of the middle or southern assemblies, but had been left to individuals. The provincial convention of Pennsylvania passed a resolution of the nature of a hostile manifesto; declaring their wish to see harmony restored between Britain and the colonies, but that if the humble and loyal petition of the congress to his majesty should be disregarded, and the British administration, instead of redressing grievances, were determined by force to effect a submission

* See Stedman.

[Warlike preparations. Expedition to Concord.]

to the late arbitrary acts of parliament, in such a situation they held it their indispensable duty to resist that force, and at every hazard to defend the dearest privileges of America. Preparations were now making throughout the colonies for holding a general congress in the month of May; while in the intermediate time the provincial conventions continued to meet, in order to appoint delegates to the congress, direct and hasten military preparations, and encourage the spirit of resistance in the people.

But, as the republican spirit of Massachusetts had from the beginning carried opposition to a much greater length than in the other colonies, so in this province actual hostilities first commenced. The provincial congress having met in February 1775, directed its chief attention to the acquisition of arms and warlike stores, by purchase, seizure, or any other means. Contributions were levied for defraying the expense of warlike preparations. The most violent of the Bostonians had removed into the country, to join the other colonists; but those who remained in the town, though less outrageous, were equally hostile: they greatly co-operated with their friends in the country, by communicating whatever they could discover of the intentions of the British governor, and by this means became more instrumental in defeating his plans.

General Gage having received intelligence that some ordnance was deposited at Salem, on the 26th of February sent a detachment to bring the stores to Boston. The troops embarked on board a transport, and landing at Marblehead, proceeded to Salem; but the Americans having received information of the design, had removed the cannon. The commander of the detachment marched farther into the country, in hopes of overtaking the stores; but was stopt by a small river, over which there had been a drawbridge: this had been taken up by a multitude of people on the opposite shore, who alleged that it was private property, over which they had no right to pass without the consent of the owner. The officer, seeing a boat, resolved to make use of it for transporting his men; but a party of peasants jumped into the boat with axes, and cut holes through the bottom. A scuffle arose between them and the soldiers about the boat: a clergyman who had seen the whole transaction, interposed, and having convinced the people that the pursuit of the cannon was now too late to be successful, prevailed on them to let down the bridge. The British troops passed: and, finding their object unattainable, returned to Boston.

During the spring, the provincial agents had collected a great quantity of stores, which were deposited at Concord, a town situated twenty miles from Boston. Informed of the magazine, general Gage sent a body of troops, late in the night of the 19th of April, to destroy these stores. The detachment consisted of the grenadiers and light infantry of his army, and the marines, under the command of lieutenant-colonel Smith and major Pitcairn, amounting to about nine hundred men. The troops took every precaution to prevent the provincials from being informed of their march; but they had not advanced many miles, before it was perceived, by the firing of guns and the ringing of bells, that the country was alarmed. Colonel Smith, finding that their destination was suspected, if not discovered, ordered the light infantry to march with all possible despatch to secure the bridges, and different roads beyond Concord; and to intercept the stores, should they be attempted to be moved. These companies about five in the morning reached Lexington, fifteen miles

[Battle of Lexington.]

from Boston, where they saw a body of provincial militia assembled on a green near the road. The Americans before this time had disclaimed all design of attacking the king's troops, professed to take up arms only for the purpose of self-defence, and avoided skirmishes with the British soldiers; but on this day hostilities actually commenced, and here the first blood was shed in the contest between Britain and America. When the British troops approached, the Americans were questioned for what purpose they had met, and ordered to disperse; on which the colonists immediately retired in confusion. Several guns were then fired upon the king's soldiers from a stone wall, and also from the meeting-house and other buildings, by which one man was wounded, and a horse shot under major Pitcairn. Our soldiers returned the fire, killed some of the provincials, wounded others, and dispersed the rest. The Americans asserted that the fire began on our side; and, besides endeavouring to establish the assertion by testimony, argued from probability; our light infantry consisted of six companies; the militia assembled at Lexington, of only one company; was it probable (they asked) that an inferior number of militia would attack a superior number of regular troops? To this the obvious answer is, the indiscretion of an alleged act is not a proof that it was not committed, nor is it sufficient to overturn positive evidence. The British officers who were present, gave the account which general Gage reported in his letters to government,* that the Americans fired first; and on the testimony of several respectable gentlemen of unimpeached character, this assertion rests.

The Americans being routed, the light infantry, who were now overtaken by the grenadiers, marched forward to Concord. A body of provincial militia being assembled upon a hill near the entrance of the town, the light infantry were ordered to drive them from that position, when the provincials were accordingly dislodged, and pursued to a bridge beyond the town; but rallying on the other side, a sharp action ensued, in which several of both parties were killed and wounded. Meanwhile the grenadiers destroyed the stores at Concord; and the purpose of the expedition being accomplished, the light infantry were ordered to retire, and the whole detachment to march back to Boston. The provincials being by this time alarmed, assembled from all quarters, and posting themselves in ambuscade, among trees, in houses, and behind walls, harassed the British troops on the flank and rear. On their arrival at Lexington, the king's soldiers met lord Percy, who was advancing with a second detachment to support the first. The corps which had been at Concord was so overcome with fatigue, that they were obliged to lie down for rest on the ground, while lord Percy formed his fresh troops into a square, which enclosed colonel Smith's party. The troops being refreshed, they proceeded on their march to Boston, still very much harassed by the Americans, whose fire they could not return, as it issued from concealed situations, which they left as soon as their muskets had been discharged. They arrived at Boston late in the evening, quite exhausted; the loss on each side amounted to about sixty killed and wounded. This first engagement demonstrated, that the Americans, though not inured to military discipline, possessed both courage and activity; and, being well acquainted with the country, had skill to avail themselves of that advan-

* London Gazette of June 10th, 1775.

[American army. Second meeting of the general congress.]

tage. The conflict also illustrated the species of warfare by which they could most successfully annoy the British soldiers. In open field they could not, till better disciplined, meet us without certain loss; but by ambuscade, harassing our marches and straitening our quarters, they were able to compensate their deficiency in a regular battle. Their own military state, and the nature of the country, dictated irregular operations, and the occurrences of this day exemplified the expediency of a cursory mode. The British troops, though consisting in all of two thousand men, being so pressed by those desultory assailants, farther proved, that the Americans were not altogether such contemptible warriors as the informers of government had represented, and the credulity of ministers and their supporters believed.

The Americans represented this march of the British troops back to Boston as a retreat, and themselves as having gained a victory; at the same time they declared hostilities to have been begun by the king's forces. Irritated by this conceived aggression, and by the reduction of their stores, and elated by their supposed success, their countrymen imagined that they could drive the royal army from Boston: they were farther inflamed by a report, that one object of the expedition to Concord was to seize John Hancock, already mentioned, and Samuel Adams, two leading characters in the provincial convention, and the latter a delegate to the general congress. The militia poured in from every quarter of the province, and formed a considerable army, with which they invested Boston. The army being in the field, the provincial congress passed regulations for arraying it, fixing the pay of the officers and soldiers, levying money, and establishing a paper currency to defray expenses, pledging at the same time the faith of the provinces for the payment of its notes. The congress farther resolved, that general Gage, by his late conduct, had utterly disqualified himself from acting in the province as governor, or in any other capacity, and that no obedience was due to him; but, on the contrary, that he was to be considered as an inveterate enemy. Thus they assumed both the legislative and executive authority: meanwhile they attempted to justify their conduct in an address to the people of Great Britain; to whom they presented their statement of the actions at Lexington and Concord. They still made great professions of loyalty, but would not (they said) tamely submit to persecution and tyranny; appealed to heaven for the justice of their cause, and declared, that they were determined either to be free, or die. Their account of the contest at Lexington being rapidly spread through the other colonies, was received with unhesitating belief, and produced throughout the continent nearly the same effect as in their own province; stimulating resentment to hostility, and encouraging hopes of success. Similar resolutions were adopted by the other provinces, concerning the array of an army, the establishment of a revenue, and the civil administration of affairs. Lord North's conciliatory plan now arriving, was every where rejected, and increased their indignation. It was (they said) a weak attempt to disunite the colonies, and, by detaching a part from the defence of their rights, to reduce the whole to such terms, as the British government thought proper to impose: they execrated the intention as tyrannical, but despised the design as inefficacious.

Such was the American disposition of mind when the general congress assembled on the appointed day at Philadelphia: and the measures

[Spirit of republicanism. Capture of Ticonderoga.]

which they adopted, confirmed the provincial meetings in their resolutions and conduct. The influence of the sentiments and principles of Massachusetts Bay had been growing stronger in the other colonies, ever since the Boston port bill: in that province originated the general continental assembly, the confederacy of the association, the several addresses, and, in short, the chief resolutions of the congress of 1774. In the present session their first step was, to appoint Mr. Hancock, the most active instigator of Massachusetts, president. Their next measure was, to raise an army, and establish a paper currency, according to the model of Massachusetts. On these notes was inscribed, *The United Colonies*, as the security for realising the nominal value of this currency. To retaliate upon Britain for the prohibitory act, they strictly prohibited the colonies from supplying the British fisheries with any kind of provision; and, to render this order the more effectual, stopped all exportation to those settlements which still retained their obedience. They voted, that the compact between the crown and the people of Massachusetts Bay was dissolved by the violation of the charter of William and Mary; and therefore recommended to the inhabitants of that province, to proceed to the establishment of a new government, by electing a governor, assistants, and a house of assembly, according to the powers contained in their original charter. They passed another resolution, that no order for money written by any officer of the British army or navy, their agents or contractors, should be received or negotiated, or supplies of any kind afforded either to land or sea forces in British service: they also erected a general post-office at Philadelphia, to extend through the united colonies. Thus did the general congress assume all the powers of sovereign authority; they agreed on articles of perpetual union, by which they formed themselves into a federal republic for common defence, for the security of liberty and property, the safety of persons and families, and mutual and general welfare. Each colony was to regulate its constitution within its own limits, according to the determination of its convention; but whatever regarded federal security, welfare, and prosperity, was to depend on the congress. This body was also to have the determination of peace and war, alliances, and arrangements for general commerce or currency. The congress was to appoint, for the executive government of the United States, a council of twelve from their own body, to hold offices for a limited time; and any of the colonies of North America, which had not joined the association, might become members of the confederacy, on agreeing to the conditions.

These were the leading institutions of a combination, which formed its system on principles evidently not monarchical. Several colonies had been loyal, and attached to kingly government, though others were originally democratic; but now the measures of the British administration had amalgamated all their provincial differences into one mass of republicanism. The province of New-York, disgusted at the disregard shown to their application to both houses of parliament, now entered into the colonial views with as much eagerness as their most ardent neighbours. Georgia also in a few weeks joined the confederacy; and thus from Nova Scotia to Florida there was one general determination to resist the claims of Great Britain.

In this month some private persons belonging to the back settlements of New-York and Massachusetts, without any public command or even

[Siege of Boston. Americans take possession of Bunker's hill.]

suggestion, undertook an expedition to Ticonderoga and Crown Point. The leader of this enterprise was an active adventurer, named Ethan Allen: this partisan, having been frequently at Ticonderoga, had observed a great want of discipline in the garrison, from which he inferred that it would be easy to take it by surprise. Having proceeded with secrecy and despatch, he captured the fort without any resistance, and immediately after made himself master of Crown Point. These fortresses, by commanding lakes George and Champlain, and forming one of the gates of Canada, were of signal importance; but ministers having been so completely misinformed as to expect no military exertions from the Americans, had not thought it necessary to guard against their enterprises.

The provincial forces now blockaded Boston by land; and the neighbouring countries refusing to supply the British with fresh provisions and vegetables by sea, they began to experience the inconveniences of a complete investment. These were increased by the number of inhabitants who still remained in the town, and whom the governor thought it expedient to retain as hostages. On the 25th of May, a considerable re-enforcement arrived from Britain, under generals Howe, Burgoyne, and Clinton. Gage, who since the formation of the American army had confined himself to defence, now judged his force sufficiently strong for offensive measures. As a preliminary step to the commencement of his movements, on the 12th of June he issued a proclamation, offering in his majesty's name a free pardon to those who should forthwith lay down their arms (John Hancock and Samuel Adams only excepted), and threatening with punishment all who delayed to avail themselves of the proffered mercy. By the same edict, martial law was declared to be in force in the province, until peace and order should be so far restored, that justice might be again administered in the civil courts. This proclamation was not only disregarded by the provincials, but considered as the prelude to immediate action; dispositions were therefore made for hostilities.

The town of Boston is situated upon a neck of land, projecting north-east into the ocean, and joined to the continent by a narrow isthmus, formed by the sea on the south, and Charles river on the north. Across the mouth of the river, north-west from Boston, is another neck of land, at the eastern extremity of which is situated Charlestown, somewhat more than a quarter of a mile over the frith from Boston. This is a spacious and well built town, and an advantageous post for either the attack or defence of the neighbouring city; it had hitherto been neglected, however, by both parties. General Gage, perceiving hostilities inevitable, prepared to fortify this post. Informed of the governor's intention, the provincials resolved, if possible, to prevent its execution, by occupying it themselves. Between the isthmus and town of Charlestown, there is a rising ground called Bunker's hill, of gradual ascent from the country, but very steep on the side of the town, and near enough to Boston to be within cannon shot. This position the provincials resolved to seize and fortify; and to execute the design, a strong detachment marched from the camp at Cambridge, about nine in the evening of the 16th of June, which, passing silently to Charlestown-neck, reached the top of Bunker's hill without being discovered. Having previously provided tools for intrenchment, they spent the night in throw-

[Battle of Bunker's hill.]

ing up works in front; and with such activity and despatch did they proceed, that before the morning their fortifications in many places were cannon proof. At break of day the alarm was given at Boston, and a cannonade began from a battery, the town, and the ships of war in the harbour. The provincials, nevertheless, went on with their works, and bore the fire with great firmness. About noon, general Gage sent a detachment over to the peninsula of Charlestown, under the command of major-general Howe and brigadier-general Pigot, with orders to drive the provincials from their works. The troops formed without opposition, as soon as they landed; but the generals perceiving the colonists to be strongly posted on the heights, already numerous, and additional troops pouring in to their aid, determined to send over for a re-enforcement. A fresh detachment soon arriving, the whole body, consisting of more than two thousand men, moved on in two lines towards the enemy, having the light infantry on the right, and the grenadiers on the left. The Americans had their right wing near Charlestown, and were covered by a body of troops posted in that town, as well as by a redoubt which they had raised in the morning. The battle was begun by the British artillery, and soon became general. The British left wing was much annoyed by firing from the houses of Charlestown, and a very severe conflict took place in that town. The main body of the provincials meanwhile received general Howe's division with great vigour, and kept up a close fire, which it required the utmost efforts of the regulars to withstand, and they could not avoid being thrown into some disorder; but rallying, and being encouraged by their officers, they returned to the charge with impetuosity, climbed up the steep hill in the face of the enemy's fire, and forced the intrenchments with fixed bayonets. General Pigot, after experiencing a gallant resistance, the town of Charlestown having been set on fire, succeeded in driving the enemy from their redoubt; and in the retreat the provincials sustained considerable loss from the cannonade of floating batteries and ships of war in Boston harbour.

Though in this engagement the British carried their point, they succeeded at a great expense, having lost more than half the detachment; two hundred and twenty-six were killed, and eight hundred and twenty-eight wounded; nineteen commissioned officers being included in the former, and seventy in the latter. Among the killed were, lieutenant colonel Abercrombie and major Pitcairn, officers of eminent respectability, and extremely lamented. The loss of the Americans, according to their own account, did not exceed four hundred and fifty. The plan of attack by the British has been blamed by some military critics, who have declared that the generals ought to have gone* round to Cambridge, and commenced their attack from the western side of the hill, where it was easy of ascent; and that thus the Americans would not have been defended by their works, which were only raised opposite to Boston, and not round the whole hill; besides which, they might have cut off the retreat of the provincials, and compelled them to surrender at discretion. It was replied to these strictures, that the British themselves, by the proposed movement would have been exposed to the main army of their antagonists, and hemmed in between that force and the detachment at Bunker's hill. The British were also blamed for not pursuing the retreating Americans, and defended on the same grounds

* Stedman, vol. i. p. 12.

[Manifesto of congress. Washington appointed commander in chief.]

as from the censure of the attacks: they might thus have exposed themselves to a numerous body of fresh enemies. The battle of Bunker's hill was a new instance of the valour of British troops; but in that respect proved no more than what had been uniformly experienced, and was therefore to be confidently expected. On the other hand, it evinced the valour of the Americans, who though rough undisciplined peasants, had made so bold and obstinate a stand against regular troops, and demonstrated how inaccurately ministry had been informed, or how weakly they had reasoned, when they concluded that the colonists would not fight. The provincials, after the battle of Bunker's hill, fortified another hill opposite to it, and without the isthmus; and thus enclosed the king's troops in the peninsula of Charlestown as well as Boston. The British claimed the honour of the victory, because they had driven the enemy from the field; the Americans asserted that they were really successful, because, though dislodged from one post, they had blocked up the regulars, and by keeping them from offensive operations, frustrated the purpose for which they had been sent. The royal arms (they said) had been sent there for the purpose of reducing this province, instead of effecting which they were debarred by the provincials from every offensive operation.

The general congress still continued to sit; and having received Gage's proclamation, considering it as a hostile manifesto, they resolved to answer it by a countermanifesto, setting forth the causes and necessity of taking arms. This was a very masterly paper, and in point of ability equal to any public declaration recorded in diplomatic history. It enumerated with clearness and plausibility, the alleged causes of the war, deduced the history of the American colonies from their first establishment, marked the principles of their settlements, and described their conduct to have been such as their principles required. It also sketched the policy of Britain in former times, and in the present; the beneficial consequences which accrued to both parties from the one, and the baneful effects from the other; repeated the grievances before stated; and added new subjects of complaint, in the redress and hearing refused, and in the measures for subjugation adopted. After detailing those acts and counsels, as being, together with antecedent proceedings, the causes of the war, and appealing to God and man for its justice, they specified the resources by which they should be able to carry it on with force and effect. They still professed to deprecate the continuance of hostilities; and during this session, they drew up a petition to the king, praying that he would prevent the farther effusion of blood, and adopt some means for a change of measures respecting America. They also appealed in addresses to the people of Great Britain and Ireland.

Whatever might be their desire for peace, they were not only preparing for defensive war, but forming plans of offensive operations. They appointed George Washington, esq. (a gentleman of independent fortune in Virginia, who had acquired considerable experience and character during the preceding war,) commander in chief of the American forces, and nominated Artemus Ward, Charles Lee, Philip Schuyler, and Israel Pitcairn, esqrs. to be major-generals; and Horatio Gates, esq. adjutant-general. Of these general officers, Lee and Gates were English gentlemen, who had acquired honour in the last war, and who, from disgust or principle, now joined the Americans; Ward and Pitcairn were of Massachusetts Bay, and Schuyler of New York. The congress also fixed and assigned the pay of both officers and soldiers; the

[Project of an expedition to Canada. Political and military reasons.]

latter of whom were much better provided for, than those upon our establishment. In July 1775, general Washington arrived at the camp before Boston, and all ranks vied in testifying attachment and respect for their new commander. The military spirit was very high throughout the continent; persons of family and fortune, who were not appointed officers, entered cheerfully as privates, and served with alacrity; even many of the younger quakers, forgetting their passive principles of forbearance and non-resistance, took up arms, formed themselves into companies at Philadelphia, and applied with the greatest labour and assiduity to acquire proficiency in the military exercise and discipline.

Boston continued to be blocked up during the whole year, and the British troops were greatly reduced by disease, and various evils incident to such a situation. The government had declared a resolution to subjugate the Americans if they did not submit, and the colonies not having yielded, government had made the attempt, proclaiming its assurance of success. The event was, that our troops, instead of making any progress in reducing the enemy, were shut up in a corner, and forced to remain in a state of inaction. Such was the result of the first campaign of Britain against Massachusetts Bay.

The congress began now to turn their eyes towards Canada. In that province, they knew the late acts were very unpopular, not only among the British settlers, but the French Canadians themselves, who having experienced the difference between a French and British constitution, gave the preference to the latter; and besides, having formed connexions with their fellow subjects, many of them adopted their sentiments. The Canadians were displeased with the neglect of the petition presented against an offensive law, and therefore the more readily disposed to favour associations against odious acts. The extraordinary powers placed in the hands of general Carleton, governor of Canada, by a late commission, were new and alarming, and appeared to the inhabitants evidently to demonstrate the purposes for which they were granted. By these he was authorized to embody and arm the Canadians, to march them out of the country for the subjugation of the other colonies, and to proceed even to capital punishment in all places against those whom he should deem rebels and opposers of the laws. As soon as British troops should arrive sufficient in number to enable them to act offensively, the colonists did not doubt that they would march down from behind upon the resisting provinces. He had also engaged a number of Indians, as the provincials supposed, with the same intent. To co-operate with the disaffected in Canada, and to anticipate the probable and suspected designs of general Carleton, they formed the bold project of invading his province. The scheme being adopted, its successful execution depended chiefly on the celerity of movement; while the British troops were cooped up at Boston, and before re-enforcements could arrive from England. The advantages gained by Ethan Allen greatly facilitated the success of the enterprise. In August, three thousand men, commanded by generals Schuyler and Montgomery, marched to lake Champlain; which crossing in flat-bottomed boats, they proceeded to St. John's. Schuyler now falling sick, the command devolved upon general Montgomery. This gentleman, by birth an Irishman, and of a good family, had served in the seven years war with great reputation in America; after the peace, he had settled in that country, purchased an estate in New-York, married a lady of that province, and

[Expedition to Canada under Montgomery.]

from that time considered himself as an American. He was a great lover of liberty; and conceiving the Americans to be oppressed and driven to resistance, he was induced by principle to quit the sweets of an easy fortune, and the enjoyment of a loved philosophical rural life, with the highest domestic felicity, and to take an active share in all the dangers of war. Besides his skill in military affairs, he possessed in a high degree the important power of conciliating the affections of men: thus he easily recruited his troops, and rendered them ardent in the execution of his designs. He detached the Indians from general Carleton's service, and having received some re-enforcements from the artillery, prepared to besiege Fort St. John's, which was garrisoned by the seventh and twenty-sixth regiments, being nearly all the British troops in Canada.* The popularity of the cause and of the general, procured the Americans supplies of provisions, and every other assistance which the Canadians could contribute to the advancement of the siege. The progress of Montgomery, however, was retarded by want of ammunition, and to supply this defect, he proposed to make himself master of Fort Champlain, a small garrison, five miles from the scene of his operations, in which he understood a considerable quantity of ammunition was deposited. In the fort there were about one hundred and sixty men, commanded by major Stopford. Montgomery sent against the place three hundred men, with only two six pounders, and hardly any ammunition; they formed no regular battery, which would, indeed, have been useless to a force so scantily provided with artillery. It was expected that the garrison would have been able to hold out against such a siege, but it surrendered the 3d of November, on condition that they should be allowed to go out with the honours of war. It was much regretted, that the English commander had not destroyed the ammunition; as, falling into the hands of the Americans, it enabled them to proceed with more important operations. Meanwhile, Ethan Allen, understanding that Montreal was in a very defenceless state, attempted to add this important place to his former conquests; and with one hundred and fifty men he crossed the river St. Lawrence, about three miles below Montreal; but the towns-people, being better disposed towards England than many of the other Canadians, joined the garrison, which did not exceed thirty-six men, and under major Campbell attacked and defeated Ethan Allen's detachment, and took the colonel himself prisoner.

Colonel MacLaine, a brave and experienced officer, a Scotch highlander by birth, prepared to raise a regiment of his countrymen, who had emigrated from the Western Isles to America, and had not obtained the settlements which they expected. Having collected about three hundred, he gave them the title of the Royal Highland Emigrants, and proceeded with them to Montreal, expecting to be joined by general Carleton, who intended to cross the river at that place, and march to the relief of St. John's. The general arriving, found his whole force, including the party by which he was there joined, not to exceed a thousand men, and chiefly irregulars. With these having attempted to land on the south side of the river, he was encountered by a party of the provincials, who easily repulsed his forces, still more undisciplined than themselves, and disconcerted his whole project. The capture of Fort Champlain on the 20th of October greatly facilitated the siege of St.

* Stedman, vol. i. p. 133.

[Capture of Montreal. March of Arnold across the country.]

John's, now deprived of all hopes of assistance from the governor of Canada. The American general having obtained plenty of ammunition, proceeded with such vigour, that in ten days he compelled the fort to surrender at discretion on the 2d of November. Montgomery lost no time in improving his advantage, but, crossing St. Lawrence, proceeded to Montreal, which being incapable of defence against the American force, the general evacuated it, and retired to Quebec. The Americans, finding Montreal defenceless, when the inhabitants offered to capitulate, answered, that from their situation they could not, as enemies, have any title to expect a capitulation; that, however, the Americans had not come to Canada as enemies, but as friends; on that ground, he pledged himself to protect them in the enjoyment of their rights, conformably to the British constitution before its violation by the Canada act, and promised to burthen them as little as possible. Montgomery's moderate proceedings increased his popularity among the Canadians. Having taken possession of Montreal, he made dispositions for advancing to besiege the capital of Canada, and there were several circumstances favourable to his hopes of success. The works of the town had been greatly neglected from the time of the peace, as, by the cessions of France, no enemy was conceived to be in the vicinity. The garrison did not consist of above eleven hundred men, of which very few were regulars; and the greater number of the inhabitants were ill affected to the framers of their new constitution. General Carleton, though of high military reputation, was by no means conciliating in his manners; his social attention was almost solely bestowed on the Canadian noblesse, without extending to the much more numerous and more truly important class of commoners, and he was considered as the principal instigator of the ministry to the measures which they had proposed for governing that province.

While the British governor, with these disadvantages, undertook to defend Quebec against Montgomery, an attempt was made from another quarter, to take that city by surprise. Col. Arnold, having a command under Washington before Boston, submitted to the general a plan of attacking Quebec, by a route hitherto untried, and deemed impracticable. The river Kennebec reaches from the sea as far as the lake of St. Peter, at no great distance from Quebec. The colonel proposed to proceed by sea to the mouth of this river in New-Hampshire, with one thousand five hundred men: to sail up the river, which is navigable to near its source; and penetrating through the forests and hills which constitute the frontier of New-England and Canada, to come upon Quebec, on a side on which it could not possibly expect to be attacked. Washington approving of the plan, Arnold speedily set sail with his troops. Their difficulties in the river, which is full of rocks and shoals, were extremely great, but their fortitude and perseverance were still greater. In some places the navigation was so hazardous, that they were obliged to come on shore, and carry their boats and rafts on their backs. Having by their intrepidity and perseverance, notwithstanding these obstacles, arrived at the end of the watercourse, they had still other difficulties to surmount by land. The forests which they had to traverse, were filled with swamps; the hills which they must cross, were steep and rugged; their provisions began to fail; which, together with the fatigue that they had endured, produced distempers.* A third part of the detachment deserted, with a colonel at its head; but Arnold,

* Stedman's History, vol. i. p. 138.

Junction with Montgomery. Siege of Quebec.]

neither dispirited by this desertion, nor by the distempers under which the remainder of the troops laboured, left the sick behind, marched on, and on the 9th of November, six weeks after his departure from Boston, arrived on the banks of St. Lawrence opposite to Quebec, and there pitched his camp on a spot called Point Levy. The Canadians received the Americans here with the same good will that Montgomery's corps had experienced in the neighbourhood of Montreal; they supplied them liberally with provisions and necessities, and rendered them every other assistance in their power. Arnold immediately published an address to the people, signed by general Washington, of the same nature with that which had been before issued by Schuyler and Montgomery. Fortunately, when Arnold arrived on the banks of the river, the boats had been removed, so that he could not immediately cross; and thus was he prevented from accomplishing his purpose of taking the place by surprise. Before he had time to provide boats and rafts, the city was alarmed, and this delay saved Quebec. Having no artillery, Arnold was not prepared for a siege; he, however, attacked one of the gates, and was repulsed with great slaughter. Seeing the impracticability of taking the town without cannon, he crossed the river and occupied his former position, determined to remain there, where he could intercept supplies and communication, until Montgomery should arrive from Montreal. Montgomery, after the capture of that place, employed himself in constructing flat boats; and the British armament, consisting of eleven armed vessels, on board of which were general Prescott, and some other officers of rank, together with a large quantity of military stores, was obliged to surrender to his victorious arms.

The American general having on the 5th of December joined Arnold, appeared before Quebec, and immediately sent a summons to Carleton to surrender. The British general treated this demand with contempt, and refused to hold any correspondence with a rebel. The American commanders, who were still very slenderly provided with artillery, rested their chief hopes of intimidating the garrison by the appearance of their united forces, and on the co-operation of the disaffected inhabitants. In both these expectations, however, they found themselves disappointed: the garrison resolved to defend itself to the last extremity, and the most powerful inhabitants having a large property in the city, however ill affected towards Britain, seeing that by the admission of the colonists their effects would be in danger, and that therefore it was their interest to defend the city, were no less anxious than the most loyal friends of government to prevent it from being taken, and to stimulate the efforts of the rest of the citizens, with whom, from their situation, their influence was great. Between the British troops and the inhabitants of Quebec, ill disposed as they reciprocally were, and different as were their motives, there prevailed as perfect and effective an unanimity of counsels and exertions, as if they had been actuated by the same spirit. The American commander, unprepared for a regular siege, at a season of the year so inimical to encampments in those cold and tempestuous regions, had no alternative, but either to desist from the attempt, or to take the city by storm. To tarnish by retreat the brilliancy of the first campaign, hitherto so auspicious, military glory forbade; policy dictated, that nothing should be left undone to maintain the public ardour, at present glowing from success; and many of the troops threatened to leave the general, if he did not try to

[Attempt to storm the place. Death and character of Montgomery.]

accomplish the chief object of the expedition. All these reasons determined Montgomery to make the attack, though he was fully aware of the difficulties. The measure was no doubt adventurous: but it was probably one of those hazards which must be incurred, in situations in which defeat, after an arduous struggle, is immediately less dishonourable, and ultimately less prejudicial, than the abandonment of an object without contest. Whatever may be thought of the general's determination to attempt a storm, there was but one opinion concerning the dispositions which he made for attack; these were by all military judges allowed to be skilful and masterly. The plan was, to make four assaults: two false, by Cape Diamond and John's Gate; and two real, under Cape Diamond, by Drummond's wharf and the Potash. These operations were to be begun on the 31st of December, at break of day; but by some mistake, an alarm was given before the real attacks commenced, so that the false assaults did not produce the intended diversion. Montgomery headed one of the real attacks, and Arnold the other. Montgomery, with nine hundred men, had to pass through a narrow defile between two fires; he led his men, however, with the greatest coolness and intrepidity; he passed the first barrier attended by a few of his bravest officers and men, and marched boldly at the head of the detachment to attack the second: this barricado was much stronger than the first; several cannon were there planted, loaded with grape shot, accompanied with a well supported discharge of musketry. From one of these an end was put to the hopes of America in the gallant Montgomery. The general was among the first that fell, and with him his aid-de-camp and several other gallant officers. The Americans, deprived of their gallant leader, made a short pause, but did not retreat. They continued the attack for a considerable time with courage and firmness; but finding their efforts ineffectual, they retired. Arnold, in his part of the attack, was at first successful; he took possession of the lower town, but being wounded, was obliged to retire from battle. The next in command supplied his place with intrepidity and skill, but the garrison, being now freed from the other part of the assailants, turned their whole force against Arnold's troops, and, after an obstinate resistance, drove them away from the town with great loss.

The death of Montgomery was more regretted by the Americans, than the repulse from Quebec; during his command, he had displayed such skill and abilities, as proved him to be fit for any military service in which he might be employed. Great in his designs, fertile in resources, skilful in plans, cool and intrepid in action, he commanded the admiration both of those for whom, and against whom, he fought; an engaging disposition, benevolent affection, and agreeable conversation rendered him at once beloved and esteemed by all those with whom he conversed; and even those who considered him as the champion of rebellion, bore testimony of his virtues. Colonel Arnold, being thus disappointed in his endeavours against Quebec, resolved nevertheless to continue in the province, and encamped on the heights of Abraham, where he fortified himself, and put his troops in such a situation as to be still formidable. Thus closed the campaign in the northern part of British America, in which the colonists, though they did not obtain the whole of their object, yet made great progress, and what was of still greater consequence, displayed such courage, enterprise, and skill; as demonstrated that ministers, in concluding that the provincials would be easily and speedily coerced, had formed their judgment on very erroneous grounds.

[Proceedings in Virginia. Lord Dunmore.]

In the southern colonies, though regular hostilities did not begin this year, yet there was the strongest evidence that they were fast approaching. In Virginia, a long course of jealousy, distrust, suspicion, and contention, between the governor and the governed, terminated in open violence. The Virginians, who before the act of 1774, the votaries of monarchical principles, had been loyal, and much attached to lord Dunmore their governor, were now become as forward as their neighbours in acts of combined resistance. There were, however, many loyalists in the province: and it might have been easier, through their means, by soothing the disaffected to detach Virginia from the provincial concert, than most of the other colonies. Their governor, however, though a valiant soldier, did not possess all the qualities requisite in such delicate circumstances. He was violent, unaccommodating, and precipitate: he had by no means that dexterity of address, which, by placing opposite parties against each other, could mould both to his own purposes. Bold and active in exertion, he was impolitically open in the means which he employed: by abstaining from extremities, he might have amused the votaries of resistance, until he had established concert among the numerous loyalists. He certainly took the most direct, but not the easiest and safest road, and did not arrive at the destined end. Lord Dunmore, at the beginning of the disturbances, had transmitted to the British government an account of the condition of this province. This statement represented the planters as encumbered with debts, for the extrication from which they were desirous of rebellion. This account, having by some means become known, added particular resentment against the governor, to the general causes which induced the people to oppose the government. Public meetings and military associations were universally encouraged, and the first were very prevalent. His lordship now received the conciliatory propositions from England, which he laid before the council of Virginia: that body acceded to those offers; but the assembly unanimously refused their concurrence, and increased the military establishment. The governor removed from the public magazine at Williamsburgh, a large quantity of gunpowder; and an armed force, commanded by Mr. Henry, a popular leader, attempted to compel a restitution of the powder to its former place: but they were quieted for a time by the agreement of the receiver-general to be responsible for the re-payment. Meanwhile intelligence was conveyed to the governor, that some of the enraged planters had formed a design on his life; and, on receiving this information, Dunmore retired with his family on board one of his majesty's ships. Application was made by the assembly for his return, to give his assent to several bills, to replace the gunpowder which he had removed from the magazine, and deposit an additional quantity of military stores for the use of the colony. He answered, that he could not return unless they dissolved all illegal meetings, refrained from illegal acts, and accepted the terms proposed by parliament. The assembly, receiving this determination, entered the following resolution on their journals: that their rights and privileges had been invaded; that the constitution of the colony was endangered; and that preparations ought to be made accordingly. The assembly having broken up, and the members retired to their country seats, the governor ventured to come on shore, to a farm belonging to him on the river near Williamsburgh, where he received intelligence that a party of riflemen were on

[His scheme to excite the slaves to revolt. Project of Connelly.]

their march to seize his person; he therefore immediately retreated to boats that waited for him by the bank. The provincial party fired several shot, but at too great a distance to do any material injury. Lord Dunmore, concluding that moderate measures would not answer the purposes of government, resolved to employ very different counsels. The convention of the colony having met, took into consideration the arms, discipline, and pay of the soldiers, and adopted various resolutions, on the model that had been framed by Massachusetts Bay and the congress. Finding his province in what he thought a state of rebellion, his lordship determined to act with more rigorous severity: he issued a proclamation, declaring martial law to be in force throughout the colony: and erected the royal standard, to which he commanded his majesty's subjects to repair. More zealous in his intention to promote the interests of his country, than discriminating and moderate in his policy, he projected a scheme of very questionable wisdom:—to allure, by the offer of freedom, negro slaves, of whom there were great numbers in the southern colonies, to embrace the royal cause, by rising against their masters. Even well-wishers to British government censured this proposition, as tending to loosen the bands of society, to destroy domestic security, and instigate savages to the most atrocious barbarities. By putting arms into such hands, the friends as well as the enemies of government would suffer; the negroes neither would nor could distinguish between the well and ill affected, and would involve all the whites within their power in a promiscuous massacre. The Virginians, when this proclamation was issued, were driven to the most furious resentment, and thenceforward set no bounds to their enmity. The project had the same fate with many of the compulsory schemes of government, causing violent irritation, without affording adequate benefit. He had already secured the possession of all the country situated between Norfolk and the sea; when the provincial meeting, in order to prevent the desertion of the slaves, and to arrest the career of the British governor, resolved to send against him a considerable force. About the beginning of November, a detachment, consisting of one thousand loyalists, was despatched from the western side of Virginia to Norfolk, in the neighbourhood of which they arrived early in December. The river Elizabeth divided them from the town; they attempted to pass it, but were repressed by a strong body of provincials, who were posted on the opposite side. More bold than prudent, Dunmore attempted to dislodge them from their intrenchments, but was repulsed: the English abandoned their position, and their commander, with the loyalists, retired on board the ships.

In the back settlement, many of the Americans, knowing little of the proceedings on the coasts, were strongly attached to the British government. Mr. Connelly, a native of the interior part of Pennsylvania, proposed to lord Dunmore to invade Virginia, and other southern colonies, with parties of loyalists from the inland country, that he might acquire the co-operation of the Indians, and of the slaves stimulated against their masters. His lordship approved of the design; but Mr. Connelly, having set out to carry it into execution, was seized on his way; and his papers being read, the whole scheme was discovered and overthrown, and Mr. Connelly sent prisoner to Philadelphia.

Mr. Martin and lord William Campbell, respectively governors of
VOL. VII.—47

[Proclamation of the king, and counter manifesto of congress. Result of 1775.]

North and South Carolina having adopted similar plans of exciting the negroes to insurrection, and calling down the back settlers, were obliged to leave their governments, and retire on board ships of war.

His majesty having, soon after the battle of Bunker's hill, published a proclamation for suppressing rebellion, and prohibiting correspondence between his British subjects and American rebels, the congress, in a counter manifesto, denied the charges, and declared in the name of the people of the united colonies, that punishment inflicted by their enemies upon any person, for favouring, aiding, or abetting the cause of American liberty, should be retaliated in the same kind and degree on the favourers and supporters of ministerial oppression; thus congress, advancing progressively in assumption of authority, now professed to treat the government of Great Britain on a footing of equality. So far were the predictions of ministers from being fulfilled, and their objects effected throughout America, by the civil and military operations of one thousand seven hundred and seventy-five!

CHAP. XVI.

Britain.—Majority favourable to the ministerial system.—Minister's dexterity in managing parliament.—The wisest opposers of war wave the question of right, and argue from expediency.—Not a war of ministers or parliament only, but of the people.—Apprehension of Mr. Sayre for high treason—inconsistent and defective evidence—the accused is discharged.—Meeting of parliament.—The king's speech.—General view of ministerial and opposition reasonings, motives, and proceedings.—Employment of Hanoverian troops in British garrisons.—Inquiry into the last campaign.—Military members of opposition declare the force inadequate.—Militia bill.—Examination of Mr. Penn, respecting the dispositions and force of the Americans.—His testimony disregarded by the majority in parliament.—Mr. Burke's conciliatory bill, on the constitutional principle of granting taxes only by the people or their representatives—rejected.—Lord North's prohibitory bill—passed into a law.—Different departments of Messrs. Burke and Fox in opposition.—Petition from Nova Scotia.—Discussion of the employment of Irish troops for the service of the king in America.—Mr. Fox's proposed inquiry into the ill success of his majesty's arms—rejected.—Lord North, desirous of pleasing both parties, satisfies neither.—Supposed not entirely to approve the coercive system.—Subsidy to German princes.—Last effort of the duke of Grafton for conciliation.—Ministers assure parliament that another campaign will crush the revolt.—Supplies.—Ways and means.—Scotch militia bill—rejected.—Session closes.

In Britain there was a great majority favourable to the ministerial system, who deemed the Americans rebels against lawful authority, traitors, and cowards; and that coercion, therefore, was both just and expedient; those who vindicated their resistance were termed levellers, Cromwellians, republicans, and enemies to their king and country.* Many persons conceived, as formerly, that the chief object of government was to raise a revenue from America, which would reduce the land-tax. In their estimate they overlooked the probable expense of the contest, and the likelihood that, on a balance of accounts, there would be a great deduction from the revenue to be thus acquired. The loss of the American commerce was not immediately felt to nearly the full extent; considerable remittances had been received before the ports were shut up, especially in corn, which, there being at this season a scarcity in Britain, was a very valuable article. The peace between Russia and Turkey occasioned an unusual demand for goods, so that in some quarters trade was brisker than in former years. The diminution of the American commerce had not yet generally produced its effects, and great numbers of merchants were not hindered in joining in commendation of the ministerial system.

Whatever might be the wisdom which lord North exerted in administering the important concerns of the kingdom, he employed great dexterity in managing parliament. He was peculiarly skilful in addressing himself to the opinions, prejudices, and passions of the country gentlemen. Their approbation of the plan for taxing America had proceeded from self-interest overlooking the means of its own promotion; they ap-

* In the ministerial newspapers and pamphlets, *passim*.

[Distinction of whig and tory revived. Majority of the nation in favour of ministry.]

proved of coercing the colonies, in order to acquire revenue ; and in their eagerness for that object, forgot the probable cost : many other men of property were amused with the same idea ; by compelling the provincials to submit, the public burthens would, they thought, be lightened, and *war with America diminish taxes*. It was indeed a war not of the minister only, nor even of the parliament, but of the nation. Addresses poured in from all quarters, expressing abhorrence of the impious and unnatural rebellion, and the obstinacy and wickedness of the colonists. If there were abhorers, however, there were petitioners also : certain merchants felt the discontinuance of intercourse very severely, in the reduction of their trade, and the interruption of their payments ; and various addresses were presented to his majesty from commercial and manufacturing towns and bodies : some of these were expressed in very strong terms, but the remonstrance of the city of London far exceeded others in severity. The discussion of the American contest revived the distinction of whigs and tories ; some, professing themselves of the former class, exclaimed against the opposers of parliamentary authority, as a deviation from the doctrine and practice of whigs ; who, inimical to the extension of kingly prerogative, were the supporters of parliamentary privilege. Others replied, that the essence of whig principles consisted in resisting arbitrary measures, and in supporting the rights of the people, whether they were attacked by one or many. If (said they) parliaments destroy the liberty of subjects in America, they can no longer be supported by whigs ; by seizing their property without their own consent, and depriving them of trial by their peers, they take from the colonists the most valuable blessings of liberty. Polemical discussion as usual ran to extremes ; the reasoning of the tories favoured despotic power ; the arguments of the whigs verged to republicanism. On viewing the reasonings for and against the right of taxation, as they are contained in the parliamentary debates and political treatises of the times, a reader may perceive a very striking difference. The supporters chiefly argued from alleged instances, the opponents from general principles. The promoters pointed out certain cases in which British subjects were taxed without their own consent ; whereas their adversaries contended it was a fundamental rule of the British constitution, that no supply should be granted, but by the people or their delegates ; that the exceptions confirmed the principle ; and that if certain individuals or classes submitted to be under the exception, others were under no obligation to follow their example. The Americans, said ministers and their advocates, are as much represented as the many inhabitants of Britain who have no vote at the election of members of parliament. To this argument two answers were returned ; first, that every Briton is virtually represented ; since the laws that bind him, bind also the legislators : secondly, the premises were admitted, that representation is partial and imperfect in Britain, but not the conclusion, that because within this realm many without being represented paid taxes, therefore the Americans were bound to do the same. The wisest and ablest of the anti-ministerialists dwelt less upon the abstract question of taxation by themselves or their representatives essential to constitute a free people ; they insisted chiefly on expediency : we had gained much, and might gain more, from the increasing prosperity of the Americans, without taxation ; we were losing much, and likely to lose a great deal more, by the attempt to extort a re-

[Apprehension of Sayre for high treason. Parliament. Speech of the king.]

venue; it was our interest to return to the policy which produced gain, and abandon the counsel which produced loss. Whatever were the arguments against coercive measures, the balance of numbers was greatly on the side of ministry; and as far as a government is justified in its measures by a conformity to the inclinations of the majority of the governed, so far were ministry justified in their coercive system: the people might have been misinformed and deluded; acts might have been used by ministerial agents to misrepresent the enemy, and the purposes of hostility; but, if afterwards, taught by experience, the people should change their opinion, and censure those who allured them to the war, ministers could fairly answer, "It is your act: why do you blame us for going on with what your addresses and encouragement induced us to begin."

While the nation was generally favourable to ministerial measures, and inimical to the Americans, an incident happened, which concerned a personage dear to every worthy Briton of all parties, and alarmed both the supporters and opponents of government. There was in London a banker of the name of Sayre, an American by birth, and commercially connected with the colonies. A gazette announced, that this gentleman was committed to the Tower for high treason; and the grounds being unknown, the notification produced a great number of reports, which were eagerly swallowed and spread by public credulity. It was said that Mr. Sayre had formed a design of seizing the king at noon-day on his way to the house, removing him out of the kingdom, taking possession of the Tower of London, and overturning the present government. To effect these purposes, he had bribed two of the soldiers of the guards, who each engaged to gain a file of privates. This party was to carry their schemes into effect, in the face of all the other soldiers who had not been bribed. The evidence for the charge was Mr. Richardson, adjutant in the guards, who declared on oath that Mr. Sayre had signified to him such intentions. Mr. Sayre admitted that he had conversed with this man very freely concerning the destructive contest between Great Britain and America, and affirmed that there was not spirit in the country to effect a change of men and measures, but denied that he ever had thought of such a plan, or expressed himself to the purport averred by Mr. Richardson; that if there had been any such plot, the informer should have waited until it was farther advanced; since if real, he must have been furnished with many corroborating circumstances. It was answered on the part of lord Rochford, who had committed him, that the folly of an imputed design, or of the conduct of its discoverer, is not sufficient to disprove positive evidence; and that whatever degree of credit he gave it in his private opinion, in an official capacity he was obliged to proceed upon the oath of a man whose character had not been impeached. Mr. Sayre was closely confined for five days; but being brought before lord Mansfield at the end of that time, the chief justice saw the inconsistency of the charge, and admitted him to bail, on very slight security to a man of fortune charged with a capital offence; the accused was bound for 500*l.* and two sureties for 250*l.* each. No prosecution was attempted; the bail was discharged. Mr. Sayre sued lord Rochford for illegal imprisonment, and recovered a thousand pounds.

On the 25th of October parliament met for the despatch of business. His majesty's speech, which was of considerable length, turned chiefly

[Debate upon the address.]

upon American affairs. He had called the houses together to deliberate concerning the colonists. Those who had endeavoured to inflame the Americans by misrepresentation, and by diffusing sentiments repugnant to their constitutional dependence, had at length succeeded in exciting them to revolt and hostility, which manifested themselves not only in preparations for war, but in actual rebellion. The authors of this desperate conspiracy had totally different intentions from the crown and parliament, from which they had hitherto derived signal advantage. The former designed to amuse this country with general professions of loyalty and attachment, while they had really nothing in view but the establishment of an independent empire. We proposed rather to undeceive, than to punish; therefore only small forces were sent, and propositions of a conciliatory nature accompanied the measures that were employed to enforce authority. The rebellious war was now become general; the object was too important, the spirit of the British nation too high, and the resources with which God had blessed her too numerous, to give up so many colonies, which she had planted with industry, nursed with tenderness, encouraged by many commercial advantages, and protected and defended at much expense of blood and treasure. Wisdom, and ultimately mercy, directed us to employ these resources, for vindicating our rights and honour. He had greatly augmented the army, and increased the navy; he had also assurance of succour from some foreign powers, and of general tranquillity from all. His majesty concluded his speech with declaring that he should appoint commissioners to grant pardons to such individuals or colonies as would return to their allegiance.

An address was moved, conformable to the speech, in both houses. Ministers insisted, that the proposed system and measures only could be embraced with safety and honour to the British nation. If America should become independent, she would interfere with us in every quarter of the globe, in our trade,* and in every other interest. The preservation of the blessings which were now enjoyed required us to keep America dependent on the mother country. The reduction of America might be difficult, but our resources were great; we had conquered in many more arduous wars: the spirit of the British nation when roused, became proportionate to the difficulties and danger: shall we then be told (said the minister) that this people of yesterday, whose strength is the work of our own hands, can resist the powerful efforts of this nation. Coercion being, in the declared opinion of ministers, absolutely necessary to our glory and interest, our efforts, according to their predictions, were to be irresistible. In the commons, an amendment was proposed, expressing concern that the means used to allay and suppress the disorders in the colonies, had tended to increase, instead of diminishing, the disturbances; thence it was inferred, that they were ill adapted to their end. Erroneous counsels and inefficacious conduct, manifested in the event, had resulted

* Dr. Adam Smith was at this time of so very different an opinion, that he thought England would gain much more by repealing the navigation act, which established the commercial dependence of America, than by retaining that monopoly. The event has justified the reasonings of that great philosopher: now that our monopoly is over, and that in the American market our sole trust is in the superiority of our commodities, our trade bears a greater proportion to the population and riches of America than that which we enjoyed when she was fettered by the navigation act.

[General view of ministers and opposition.]

from the want of full and perfect information of the true state and condition of the colonies. Parliament ought to obtain the most thorough knowledge of facts, and, after considering these, to employ the maturest deliberation that they might discover effectual means for restoring order and tranquillity to the British empire. By an induction of facts, they established their positions, that ministers had either been wrongly informed themselves, or made false reports to parliament. Thus they were either weak in adopting momentous measures on inadequate information, or wicked in concealing that which they possessed. Mr. Fox contended, that affairs were not in the condition ministers represented, and that justified the predictions of opposition. With his usual power of simplification, he brought the question to three heads. First, What ought to have been done : on which proposition, he compressed the principal arguments that had been used by the opponents of government from the commencement of the contest. Secondly, What ministers said would be done : under which division, he refreshed their memories with an account of their high-toned professions and various promises during the same period. Under the third head, What was done : he exhibited a very clear and concise history of ministerial measures, and the actual operations in the transactions of the last two years. The erroneous information on which ministers, in spite of experience, had relied and acted, were the false, partial, and illiberal representations of artful, designing, and interested men, who had held public offices in America. These had proposed to increase their own influence, emoluments, and authority, as well as to find the means of gratifying their petty prejudices and resentments, by extending the power of the crown to the injury of the people ; and became at last so soured by opposition and the consequent disappointment of their schemes, that their sentiments were dictated only by malice and revenge. This uniform confidence in the testimony which they had so strong reasons to distrust, was totally inconsistent with just reasoning and policy. The assertion in the speech, that the colonies had aimed at independence, was strongly controverted from the whole and every part of their conduct. It has ever been our inclination to maintain that state of harmony with the parent country, which has continued from our first establishment to the present time. It is our interest to be subject to the British empire, as long as we are allowed the privileges of other subjects. Taxation without our own consent is a violation of these ; therefore we will not be taxed without our own consent. The Americans had not aimed at independence ; they had, after long deprecating, at last resisted unconstitutional usurpation. Opposition, aware of the motives by which many of the country gentlemen were induced to support the measures of government, exhorted them to consider the consequences before they supported it farther. They expected that their contributions were to be reduced by war with America, without adverting to the enormous expenses which ministerial plans would cause during the very first campaign. Had ministers laid before the house sufficient information to justify such measures ? Had they not been themselves groping, and leading others in the dark ? Were they always to run blindfolded into every destructive measure that was proposed ? Would they, without examination and inquiry, still follow counsellors by whom they had been already so completely misled and deceived ? Had they considered the difficulties attending the support of an army of 70,000 men on

[Arguments of opposition. Probability of foreign interference.]

the other side of the Atlantic? Had they calculated how many thousand tons of shipping would be necessary for their conveyance, and for their support; or the expense of supplying these with fresh provisions from Smithfield market, and with vegetables and all other necessities from London and its neighbourhood? The land-tax must this session be raised to four shillings in the pound, and the most sanguine imagination could not fancy that it would ever again be lowered. Even if we should succeed, would burnt towns, depopulated provinces, reduced agriculture, and destroyed trade, enable the colonies to indemnify our expenses? Were these the resources that were to pay our costs; and much more to diminish the burthens of Britain? Was it not madness to fight for gain of one fund even if attainable, when it could not be compassed without a much greater loss; when we could acquire gain of another, without any contest or expense? * Such were the strong and poignant arguments by which provident senators demonstrated, that war with America would not diminish taxes, and that its promoters, as a financial speculation, would find Britain a woful loser, on the balance of accounts. But was success certain? The Americans themselves had shown valour, skill, and unanimity, which rendered the event of the contest at least doubtful, even through the efforts of the colonies alone. Would France and Spain long continue idle spectators of the contest? The ministers talked of pacific assurances, but was there any confidence to be reposed in such professions. Political conduct is to be inferred, not from the minute reports of diplomatic intrigue, but from great and comprehensive surveys of history, situation, character, policy, and passion. † By considering France in her relations of peace, neutrality, alliance, and war with different powers of Europe, it was evident that her ruling motive was ambition: her avidity was in proportion to the obstacles which she found to her projects of aggression and usurpation: for near a century this country had been indirectly her most formidable opponent by land, and directly her conqueror by sea: Britain was the seat of every confederacy that repressed her ambition, and, in the preceding war, obtained a superiority unprecedented in former contests. France, beholding England with envy, resentment, and terror, rejoiced at an internal contest which would employ great part of the British force, and enable her and her dependent, Spain, to attack their triumphant rival with considerable probability of success. She would wait until the breach was irreparable; but, as soon as she saw the complete separation effected, to which the counsels of the British government was driving the colonies, she would throw off the mask. The Spanish king, particularly ill disposed towards Britain, indignant at the humiliation of his kingdom by her power, and envious of her prosperity, would sacrifice the peculiar interest of his dominions to his connexion with France, and his own personal animosity to England. Britain would have to contend with her colonies, who were forced to revolt, and the combined power of the house of Bourbon.

Thus while a numerous body of senators supported the measures of administration for subjugating the colonies, and expressed their thorough conviction of the wisdom and efficacy of the ministerial plans and measures, a smaller number endeavoured to prove that both counsels and

* See parliamentary debates on the Address, Oct. 25th, 1775.

† See speeches of Burke and Fox.

[Employment of Hanoverian troops. Inquiry into the late campaign.]

conduct were unwise, and would be ineffectual and ruinous. The historian who, from the monuments of facts and consequences, would leave a lesson to posterity, must, in recording great undertakings, examine and investigate, not only the views and counsels of their proposers and supporters, but, when their justice or expediency is controverted, he must canvass the grounds on which such opposition rests. If measures, in themselves right and beneficial, meet with powerful obstructions, the reader will be able to see either wisdom and energy exerted in surmounting the obstacles, or folly and timidity in yielding to the difficulties; but if the undertaking be wrong and pernicious, though our opinion of its proposers and supporters be first formed from the project itself, yet it must be materially affected by the means which have been employed to deceive them concerning its nature and tendency. Whether the ministerial design and measures for subjugating America were wise or foolish, right or wrong, beneficial or injurious, the admonitions of the opposite party have a considerable share in determining their character. Lord Chatham, Messrs. Burke and Fox, advised government rather to conciliate, than compel the colonists; the admonition might be founded in misinformation, conjecture, and ignorance of the American character and of human nature. On this hypothesis, the more splendid the eloquence of such opponents, the greater praise is due to lords North, Sandwich, and Germaine, for totally disregarding their counsels. On the other hand, if the exhortations were founded in knowledge, experience, wisdom, or even common prudence, the strong and frequent repetition would enhance the blame of those to whom they were addressed in vain.* I have therefore thought it necessary to exhibit this part of parliamentary history more fully than most other periods: the circumstances called for very great deliberative wisdom and executorial ability.

Descending from the general survey of political principles, plans, and situations, which usually occupies the first meeting of a parliamentary session, to a more minute and detailed consideration of particular questions, opposition severely censured a measure alluded to in his majesty's speech, the introduction of Hanoverian troops into the garrisons of Minorca and Gibraltar; and motions were made in both houses, declaring that the scheme was totally inconsistent with the British constitution and the bill of rights; that there was no standing army in Britain, but an annual force, subject to the mutiny act, which operated only for a year, and specified the number to be employed. Ministers asserted, that the bill of rights extended its prohibitions only to troops within the kingdom, and therefore did not apply to the present case; that the bill of rights made no difference between English and foreign troops, in its regulations for the direction of military force; and that the measure was justified on the grounds of expediency from the rebellious state of America. Many arguments were used, and precedents quoted in both houses; but the question was dismissed by the usual majority in favour of ministry.

In reviewing the events of the late campaign, some of the supporters of ministers declared themselves dissatisfied with the operations and result, and lord North acknowledged he had been disappointed in his expectations. He had formed his plans the last year, in the belief that the resistance would only be partial, and without apprehending a general concert of revolt. A great force, he now saw, was necessary, and such he proposed should be employed; and accordingly, very early in the

[Militia bill. Resignation of the duke of Grafton.]

season, he introduced the army estimates for the ensuing year. When these were laid before the house, opposition contended that before they could judge of the expediency of the proposed establishment, they should receive accounts concerning the number and state of the troops now in America, and made a motion to that effect. To this proposition ministers objected, as unprecedented and inexpedient; it would expose the condition of our army, when the enemy might turn the knowledge of it to their own advantage, and our detriment; therefore the motion was negatived, and the house proceeded to consider the estimates. Thirty-eight thousand men were proposed for the sea service, and fifty-five thousand for the land, twenty-five thousand of whom were to be employed in America. Military gentlemen of opposition* insisted that the supply was inadequate; and that if they must go to war, they ought to send a much more powerful force. Ministers insisted, that the destined army, supported by such a fleet as they were sending, would be sufficient for the purpose. In consequence of a passage in the king's speech concerning the internal defence of the country, a bill was brought into the house, by which his majesty was to have the power of calling out the militia, in case of a rebellion in any part of the empire. The bill was opposed, as changing the idea of a constitutional militia, making it dependent on the crown, and converting it into a regular army. It was represented to be part of the general system for rendering the crown totally independent of the people. Ministers argued, that the regular forces being sent abroad on necessary service, the employment of the militia was the only means of defending the country, without having recourse to foreign troops. The king could not more unequivocally display the confidence he had in the zeal, affection, and loyalty of his people, than by trusting the guardianship of his crown, and person, and government, to the militia of England. By contending that such a power might be abused, the gentlemen of opposition had only stated a possibility, to which every power was liable. Should the servants of the crown misemploy the force so intrusted to his majesty, there were remedies for that as for every other malversation. The law which merely empowered the king in times of emergency, to call on those to defend the kingdom who are most interested in its welfare, was in itself reasonable and equitable as well as prudent, and it imposed the duty on those who had the strongest motives to discharge it effectually.

Among the opposers of the ministerial system this year, was the duke of Grafton, who, since his resignation of the office of prime minister, had been lord-privy seal. He had, he said, supported the measures of 1774, from misapprehension of the real state of America; he had been led to believe, by false information, and erroneous opinions, that the appearance of coercive measures was all that was requisite to establish a reconciliation. To real compulsion he had always been inimical, and now that he found it was intended by government, he could no longer support the measures; he was convinced that nothing less than a total repeal of the laws passed since 1763, would restore peace and happiness, and prevent the most destructive consequences. Resigning his office, he was succeeded by lord Dartmouth, who quitted the American secretaryship, and received the privy-seal. The American department was now

* General Conway, and colonel Barré.

[Examination of William Penn.]

intrusted to lord George Germaine.* This nobleman, after his retirement from military life, had devoted himself to political affairs; he was an acute reasoner, and a respectable speaker, distinguished for closeness of argument, precision, and neatness of language. He had been principally connected with Mr. Grenville, supported him when he was minister, and followed him into opposition. He had vindicated the supremacy of parliament, voted for the stamp act, and against its repeal: and had shown himself extremely inimical to the Grafton administration. From that circumstance, together with his reputed abilities, he was by many deemed the author of Junius. For several years after Mr. Grenville's death, he had continued in opposition; but in 1773, he joined ministry in the East India affairs, and took a decided part in the coercive measures of 1774 and 1775. Lord Rochford resigning about the same time, was succeeded by lord Weymouth in the southern department.

A little before the meeting of parliament, the celebrated Mr. Penn presented to his majesty the petition of congress, and was told that no answer would be given. This affair was repeatedly mentioned in both houses, as affording a ground for conciliation, if properly regarded, and of reproach against ministers for their total neglect of such advances. A copy of the petition having been laid before the house, the duke of Richmond, on the 7th of November, moved that Mr. Penn, whom he saw below the bar, should be examined, in order, he said, that the authenticity of the petition might be established before they proceeded to consider its contents. The ministerial lords were aware, that his grace's object extended far beyond the authenticity of the petition, and that he wished to lay before the house the knowledge which Mr. Penn was so fully qualified to give. It was carried that day, that he should not be examined; but his grace having, on the 10th, pressed it in a different form, the lords in administration consented, on condition that only specified questions should be asked. The substance of this famous evidence was, that the witness did not believe the congress had formed any designs of independence; the members composing that body had been fairly elected; were men of character, capable of conveying the sense of America; and had actually conveyed the sense of their constituents: the different provinces therefore would be governed by their decisions in all events. The war was begun, and carried on by the colonies, merely in defence of what they thought their liberties: the spirit of resistance was general, and they believed themselves able to defend their freedom against the arms of Britain. Inquiries of a more particular nature respecting Pennsylvania, produced answers which explained the force of that province to be about sixty thousand men able to carry arms, of whom twenty thousand served as volunteers, and that these consisted of men of property and character; they were furnished with the means of casting cannon in great abundance, and had a plentiful supply of small arms. The colonies were dissatisfied with the reception of their former petitions; they trusted greatly to the petition which he carried, and which they styled the OLIVE BRANCH; in bearing this application, he was considered as the messenger of peace. Were it not to succeed, they would become des-

* Formerly Sackville; he changed his name for an estate that was bequeathed to him.

[His testimonies disregarded by parliament]

perate, and probably form connexions with foreign powers which might not easily be dissolved. The Americans wished for reconciliation with this country, and would acknowledge the supremacy of Britain in every thing except in exacting taxes. Mr. Penn was asked, whether the secretary of state had made any inquiries concerning America? He answered, that none had been made.*

Mr. Penn having withdrawn, a motion was made by the duke of Richmond, that the petition from the continental congress to the king, was a ground for a conciliation of the unhappy differences at present subsisting between Great Britain and America. Besides repeating the arguments which had been so often discussed, he argued that here was a declaration which demonstrated that the Americans wished for reconciliation, and desired no concession from us derogatory to the honour of the mother country. On the side of ministry it was contended, that to treat with the congress would be to acknowledge the legality of the assembly and its proceedings; that the petition was an insidious and traitorous attempt to impose upon the king and parliament; and that, while the authors held out smooth language and false professions, they were at the very instant, in their appeals to the people of Great Britain and Ireland, abusing the parliament, denying its authority, and endeavouring to involve the whole empire in rebellion and bloodshed, by inducing their fellow-subjects in these kingdoms to make one common cause with them, in opposition to law and government; the evidence before the house was chargeable with partiality and prejudice, and deserved no regard. After a violent debate, the duke of Richmond's motion was negatived by a majority of eighty-six to thirty-three. On the thirteenth of November, the house of commons having resolved itself into a committee of supply, the minister expatiated on the necessity of reducing the colonies, and expressed a fear that he must apply for the assistance of the landed proprietors, in an additional shilling to the land tax. Opposition observed, that this was a foretaste to the country gentlemen of the advantages which they would realize from the scheme of taxing America. Lord North now advanced a position, that taxation was only a secondary object, and that the supremacy of Britain was the principal ground of war; on which remark some of his usual supporters began to express dissatisfaction. The dexterous versatility of the minister explained his meaning to be, that the idea of taxation, and of levying a productive revenue from America, was never abandoned, and that ministers merely intended its suspension. The dispute at present was of a much higher nature than it had been originally, and taxation was but an inferior consideration when the supremacy of the legislative authority of this country was at stake. He would have them therefore perfectly understand, that whatever general terms the ministers might at any time make use of, taxation neither is, nor ever was, out of their view. As a further proof of his sincerity upon this subject, he declared that there were no means by which the legislative authority and commercial control of this country over the colonies could be ensured, but by combining them with taxation: the country gentlemen were convinced, and the motion was carried in the affirmative.

* Neglect or rejection of all information which did not favour their own views, was one of the chief and most uniform characteristics of Lord North's administration.

[Conciliatory motion of Burke. Bill prohibiting trade, etc. with America.]

On the 16th of November, Mr. Burke introduced a new conciliatory bill, in which, instead of expediency, the ground of his arguments in the two preceding sessions, he founded his motion on the right of the subjects of this realm to grant or withhold all taxes, as recognized by the great financial statute passed in the reign of Edward the First, *statutum de tallagio non concedendo*. On this statute, he observed, rested the protection of property from arbitrary invasion, a security which constituted one of the most striking differences between Britain and absolute governments. He demonstrated, that, on account of the immense distance, it was impracticable for the American subjects of Britain to enjoy this privilege by representation in parliament, and that therefore, to be on an equal footing with other British subjects, they should be taxed by their own assemblies. The necessity which occasioned Edward's statute to be framed, was similar to the exigency of the present times; it originated in a dispute between that monarch and his people, relative to taxation. The latter was victorious, and obtained this important privilege, that no taxes should be imposed on them without the consent of the parliament. The present bill was intended to procure a similar advantage for the Americans; on this account, waving the consideration of the question of right, it renounced the exercise of taxation. Great Britain, however, reserved to herself the power of levying commercial duties, which were to be applied to those purposes that the general assembly of each province should deem most salutary and beneficial. The mother country also reserved to herself the power of assembling the colonies in congress. The bill then proposed to repeal all the laws of which the colonists complained, and to pass an immediate act of amnesty. The principal objections to the bill were, that it conceded too much for Britain, and not near enough to satisfy the Americans. It was also contended that, as a plan of accommodation had been already chalked out in the speech from the throne, it would be disrespectful to the king to adopt any other plan, until that had been tried. The discussion of this bill brought forward the most distinguished orators on both sides: when, on a division, experiencing the usual fate of anti-ministerial propositions, it was negatived by a great majority.

On the 20th of November, lord North introduced a bill for prohibiting all trade and intercourse with the thirteen colonies of America. It authorized the commanders of his majesty's ships of war to make prizes of the ships or goods belonging to the Americans, whether found on the high seas or in harbour, and vested the property in the captors. A clause was inserted, by which all Americans, who should be taken on board the vessels belonging to that continent, were made liable to serve indiscriminately, without distinction of persons, as common sailors on board our ships of war, at the discretion of the commanding officer. Such colonists were to be entered upon the ship's books, and considered as volunteers; and being so entered, were to be set on shore in Great Britain or Ireland, or in any part of America not then in rebellion, and there to be liberated. As this prohibitory bill comprehended every species of the American commerce and employment upon the sea along the coast of the confederated states, all the former acts which affected any particular post, or any branch of commerce, were repealed, in which the Boston port and the fishery bills were included. While all were proscribed who refused unconditional submission, pardon was held out to those who returned to

[Different provinces of Messrs. Burke and Fox.]

their duty, and commissioners were appointed for inquiring into the merits of individuals or colonies who should accept of the proffered mercy. Opposition displayed its formidable talents in showing that the proposed law amounted to a declaration of war, and drove the Americans to the alternative of absolute subjugation or independence; that it would give the finishing blow to the separation of Britain from her colonies; farther ruin our African trade and the West Indies, and arrest remittances from the colonies for the liquidation of their great debts due to British merchants. While thus producing so much mischief to our plantations and mercantile interests, the Americans would be supplied from other markets; Britain would lose a great source of wealth, with little annoyance to the colonies, and to the gain of foreign nations. It was a ridiculous inconsistency to begin with declaring war and confiscating the effects of the Americans, and conclude with some fallacious provisions concerning peace. In defence of the bill, it was said, that the Americans were at war with us; that while hostilities continued, every means must be employed to distress our antagonists, as much as if we were acting against external enemies. Messrs. Wedderburne and Thurlow displayed great ingenuity in supporting these positions, and endeavoured to prove, that the inconveniences felt by the West Indian planters and British merchants were temporary, but that the permanent good would overbalance the evil. Petitions against the bill were presented, and disregarded: it was carried, however, through both houses by a great majority, and passed into a law. While the act was pending, Mr. Hartley proposed a conciliatory bill, similar in principle and object to that of Mr. Burke, though somewhat different in detail; but it met with the same fate.

The transcendent genius of Messrs. Burke and Fox, though exercised in every subject that came before parliament, had two different fields on which they respectively displayed their greatest excellence. The legislative plans proposed by opposition, projects of conciliation, and other schemes of deliberative policy, requiring the union of accurate and extensive detail, with confirmed habits of generalization, were most frequently the productions of Mr. Burke. Discussions of executorial plans, and concise inquiries concerning specific measures, requiring also energy of intellect, firmness and decision of temper, but without demanding such a compass of general knowledge, or at least equal habits of philosophic contemplation, came chiefly from Mr. Fox. Mr. Burke, watching over legislation, might be called the lawgiver, and Mr. Fox, over executive measures and conduct, the statesman of opposition. On the 22d of November, Mr. Fox moved for an account to be laid before the house of the expenses of the army in America, from August 1773 to August 1775. He said, that from these papers he could demonstrate the delusion of ministers, and the waste of the public money, to have been astonishing. The expenses of the ordnance in particular in the year 1775, had been greater than in any of the duke of Marlborough's campaigns. Although every branch of the military service had been amply provided for by the minister's own acknowledgment, and according to his own appropriation to the respective services, a debt had been incurred in the single department of ordnance, amounting to two hundred and forty thousand pounds. When in a campaign of so little exertion the expenditure had been so great, what was to be expected from the operations of the ensuing year? Ministers opposed this motion, because, they said,

[Petition from Nova Scotia. Despondency of ministers.]

several accounts were not received. Mr. Fox obviated their objection, by confining his requisition to the papers which were in their possession; but the ministerial party also controverted this proposition, and from their unwillingness to submit the accounts to the inspection of the house, Mr. Fox was afterwards doubly vigilant in his inquiries concerning public expenditure.

A petition, before the recess, was presented* from Nova Scotia to each house of parliament, in consequence of lord North's conciliatory proposition; which by its promoters was intended as a model for the rest of the colonies. It proposed a revenue to be raised among them, under the direction of parliament. This doctrine being extremely agreeable to ministry, they gave the petition a very favourable reception, though they knew the amount of the revenue must be very inconsiderable. The proposed mode of taxation was, the payment of a certain proportionable sum on the importation of foreign commodities, but that the rate of the duty should be first fixed by parliament. To this plan it was objected, that the revenue heretofore drawn from the provinces, every part of which, except the tea duty, had been submitted to, and chiefly paid, was more productive than the new duties proposed in lieu of them would be, in case this regulation was generally adopted: neither did it appear likely, that the opulent colonies should follow the example of a district which ever had been a considerable expense to government, and continued to require a yearly grant from parliament for its support. The minister at first supported the petition, and a motion founded upon it passed the committee; but during the discussion, perceiving its inefficacy, he suffered it to be rejected.

Though the public measures and declarations of ministers expressed a determination to persevere in coercion and confident assurance of success, yet it is now known† that, at the very time of their menacing protestations, they were really oppressed with fear and despondency; they appear, indeed, to have been wavering between the false shame that prevents the abandonment of projects which had been precipitately embraced, and sad forebodings of ultimate failure.

The first business that engaged the house after the recess, was a measure of the government of Ireland; the lord-lieutenant had sent a written message to the house of commons, requiring, in the king's name, four thousand additional troops from that kingdom for the American service, promising that their expense should not be defrayed on the Irish establishment, and offering to replace them by continental auxiliaries without any expense. The commons of Ireland granted the native forces required; but after a violent debate, leaving the ministerial party in the minority, they refused to admit foreign soldiers.

The message proposing the employment of troops from and in Ireland without being paid by that country, obviously meant that they were to

* See parliamentary journals, Dec. 1, 1775.

† From various sources, and especially from the writings of Gibbon, as we may see by the following extract from a letter, written the 18th of January 1776, during the Christmas recess. "I think our meeting will be lively; a spirited minority, and a desponding majority. The higher people are placed, the more gloomy are their countenances, the more melancholy their language. You may call this cowardice; but I fear it rises from their knowledge (a late knowledge) of the difficulty and magnitude of the business."

[Discussion respecting Irish troops. Proposed inquiry of Mr. Fox.]

he paid by Great Britain ; and was not without reason considered as an engagement by the crown, to dispose of British public money without the consent or knowledge of the British house of commons. On the 15th of February 1776, Mr. Thomas Townshend moved, that the lord-lieutenant's message was a breach of the privilege of that house. The arguments by which he supported his motion were, the principles and practice of the British constitution concerning pecuniary grants, and the designs which such attempts intimated ; he also mentioned, though only incidentally, the absurd extravagance of paying eight thousand men for the use of four thousand. The ministerial speakers did not all take the same ground : lord North declared, that though his majesty's servants in Britain had a general co-operation with his servants in Ireland, the former did not consider themselves as responsible for the conduct of the latter : he however justified the message on the ground of expediency, without closely discussing the right. Others supporting a higher tone of prerogative, insisted that the king had a right to introduce foreign troops into any part of his dominions whenever he deemed it expedient. Most members of opposition were not very strenuous in support of the motion, because the scheme which it censured had not been put into execution ; and it was rejected therefore by a majority greater even than was usual.

Mr. Fox's proposed inquiry concerning the ordinance, was only preclusive to a more comprehensive scrutiny. On the 2d of February he made a motion to inquire into the cause of the ill success of his majesty's arms in North America, as also into the causes of the defection of the Canadians. That he might give the greater effect to his present proposition, he avoided every extraneous subject ; he would neither (he said) consider the right, the expediency, or the practicability of coercing America, but, for the sake of argument, admitting them all, would simply inquire whether the measures and proceedings of ministry upon their own principles, had produced the desired and predicted effect : without now discussing the end, he should merely examine the fitness of the means. Beginning with the Boston port bill, as the commencement of determined coercion, he pursued an historical detail of the ministerial measures down to the present time. If, according to the hypothesis of ministers, coercion was practicable, either they had not planned efficient measures, and afforded the proper force, or they had intrusted its direction and conduct to incompetent officers : there had somewhere been incapacity, neglect, or misconduct. Whether the rapid extension of disaffection, the successes of the Americans, and the inefficiency of our troops, was owing to unfitness in one class of servants to deliberate and to determine, in another to execute, or to both, parliament ought to be informed. The country had given the minister the means of effectual effort, and had a right to explore the causes of the failure, and to know what ministers or military officers deserved, or did not deserve, farther employment. Ministers themselves, if conscious that no blame was justly imputable to them, were interested in promoting the desired scrutiny : they would rejoice at such an opportunity of vindicating their conduct to the public, and of convincing the people that our present national disgraces, misfortunes, and application of that support which they had so liberally given, were not owing to ministerial ignorance, incapacity, or want of integrity. He concluded with a position, that none wished to avoid inquiry, but those who were either culpable themselves, or wish-

[Reply of lord North. Subsidy to German princes.]

ed to screen the culpability of others ; an observation, doubtless generally, but not universally just. Mr. Fox urged these arguments with a force which could not be resisted by reasoning : what they were unable to combat, ministers endeavoured to elude. There appeared on the the question, as on others before mentioned, a want of coincidence in the arguments of ministry and their friends. Lord North was less decisive in his opposition than many of his supporters, and very evidently showed a disposition to moderation, from which he was often recalled by his more violent coadjutors ; he had rather betrayed than discovered a disposition to conciliate, instead of coercing, but had been prevented by the abettors of stronger measures. In discussions with opposition, he showed a similar disposition, rather to palliate than directly to controvert. From the great abilities of his lordship, it may be fairly inferred, that his indecision arose in some degree from doubts about the general wisdom of the plan which he was pursuing. It was by no means probable, that a man of lord North's talents, if thoroughly convinced that what he proposed was unobjectionable, would discover such hesitation. He admitted, that miscarriages had happened, but it was impossible to foresee every event ; he was ready to resign his office, whenever the house should withdraw its confidence. Mr. Fox had charged administration with wickedness, ignorance, and neglect ; the first, he assured them, was wrong, and the two last remained to be proved. This vague, temporizing, and indecisive reply to Mr. Fox's definite charges, if it did not prove, at least afforded grounds for forming an opinion, that lord North himself was not altogether satisfied with the part which he was acting. Others of much less ability were by far more decided in their opposition to an inquiry.

On the 29th of February, treaties between his majesty and the duke of Brunswick, also the landgrave of Hesse-Cassel and the hereditary prince of Hesse-Cassel, were laid before parliament. By these agreements, four thousand three hundred Brunswick troops and twelve thousand Hessians were taken into British service. To the duke of Brunswick an annual subsidy was to be paid, of fifteen thousand five hundred and nineteen pounds. For the Hessians a double rate was to be paid, amounting to one hundred and fourteen thousand two hundred and ninety-eight pounds. The levy money to both princes was seven pounds four shillings and four pence per head ; every man killed was to be charged at the rate of the levy money. All were to receive the same pay, ordinary and extraordinary as British troops. The minister contended, that the supply was necessary, and that the terms were fair. Opposition reprobated the measure of hiring foreign mercenaries against British subjects ; the motion, however, was carried by a great majority in both houses. The secretary at war having moved for a supply of 845,000*l.* for the extraordinaries of the army, this vast demand incurred in so short a time, and in so confined and inefficacious a service, roused all the vigour of opposition. Neither the campaign of 1704, which, by discomfiting France delivered Europe ; nor of 1760, which subdued North America ; had cost near so much as 1775, which produced nothing but disgrace. Ministers rested their measures on the sanction of parliament ; the misfortunes of the last campaign (they said) were owing to their belief that the Americans were not in general so wicked as they had actually proved, and from that conviction we had

[Last efforts of the duke of Grafton for reconciliation. Assurances of ministers.]

employed too small an army ; but in the present campaign, the force which should be sent would totally reduce the colonies.

On the 14th of March, the last attempt was made to prevent war between the parent and the children. The duke of Grafton moved an address to his majesty, entreating, that to put an end to the effusion of blood, and to evince to the world the wish of the sovereign and the parliament to restore peace and tranquillity, he should issue a proclamation, declaring, if the revolted colonies would present to the commander in chief of his majesty's forces in America, or to the commissioners sent out with powers adequate to the purposes of making peace or war, a petition setting forth their grievances, hostilities should be immediately suspended, and the petition referred to the parliament, to be considered with the most solemn and serious attention. The great object of this motion seems to have been, to remedy the defects of the late prohibitory act : which, according to opposition, held out a delusive show of peace, without furnishing the means, or containing the powers, by which it could be effected. Besides the general arguments which this motion naturally suggested, its mover adduced a declaration of lord George Germaine, in the other house, that nothing less than unconditional submission from America would satisfy Britain. To promote the address, his grace farther stated, that intelligence was received by himself that messengers had been sent by France to general Washington and the congress, and argued that this conciliatory proposition, would prevent the Americans from seeking the means of defence in foreign assistance. Ministers contended, that conciliation was almost impracticable, and that nothing could more certainly prevent it than concession. An offer to admit them to amity on any other terms than those already proposed, would be a degradation to the honour of the king, the parliament, and the country. The Americans would be reduced in one campaign to accept of the terms which we were pleased to offer : France would not interfere in a dispute between us and our colonies. If she had any such intention, it would be an additional argument for employing our force to subjugate America, before she could be joined by so powerful an auxiliary. We have (they said) passed the Rubicon, and it is no longer time for us to be proposing conciliation. This was the language not of mere parrots of the political creeds that happened to be in vogue for the day, but of many senators of considerable talents and knowledge ; some highly distinguished for ability, and one equal to most men that ever appeared in a legislative assembly. A reader, who should know the origin, principles, and history of the American war, without having attended to parliamentary debate and speeches, would learn with surprise, that a most strenuous abettor of coercive measures, a determined enemy to every plan of a conciliatory spirit, a supporter of unconditional submission and a prophet of speedy subjugation, was lord Mansfield. Such powers of argument in cases of momentous importance, drawing conclusions from insufficient information and erroneous principles ; such profound wisdom sanctioning the measures, decrees, and acts of misinformation, precipitancy, and violence ; afford a striking instance of the weakness which, from the imperfection of human nature, is often intermingled with the most exalted qualities ; it teaches the reasoner in drawing his inferences, and the counsellor in forming his schemes, not to place implicit reliance on either the authority or example of even an illustrious sage.

[Scotch militia bill rejected.]

A bill was this year proposed for establishing a militia in Scotland, which was eagerly patronized by members from that country, but strongly controverted by English senators. In favour of the bill it was argued, that the obvious utility of militia as a national defence, rendered its establishment as proper in Scotland as in England; and that the attachment now evinced by Scotchmen to the family on the throne, removed objections formerly weighty. On the other side it was alleged, that there was neither necessity nor occasion for the proposed scheme. A militia was local, and paid by the landholders for their protection and defence; the Scotch paid one-fortieth part only of the land tax, out of which the militia expenses were paid: the population of Scotland was a fifth of that of England; it was therefore unreasonable in her to apply for a militia, in the maintenance of which her expense would be but one-eighth of her advantage in proportion to England. The answer to this was obvious; that though the specific fund for defraying the militia expenses was the land tax, the protection of that branch of revenue was not its sole purpose, but the defence of every constituent of private and public property and security. After a warm contest, the minister being left in a minority, the bill was rejected.

In providing the ways and means for the current year, a loan of two millions was found necessary. The funds for paying the interest, being taxes on articles of luxury, were favourable to the financial character of the minister. After passing a vote of credit for another million, the session closed on the 23d of May.

CHAPTER XVII.

Evacuation of Boston.—British troops sail to Halifax—objects of campaign 1776, three: first, recovery of Canada, and invasion of colonies by the lakes—secondly, expedition to Carolina—thirdly, and chiefly, invasion of New-York.—Quebec relieved, and Canada recovered.—British armament under sir Henry Clinton and sir Peter Parker, arrives too late in North Carolina—proceed to the south—siege of Charleston—raised.—Internal proceedings of the colonies—declaration of independence.—Objects and reasons of the New-York expedition—British force arrives there—description of New-York and its dependencies—pacificating overtures of the British commanders—rejected.—Battle of Long Island.—Americans defeated, but escape.—Capture of New-York—town set on fire by the Americans.—Battle of White Plains—Americans defeated in one part, but the main body escapes.—Battle and capture of Fort Washington.—General Howe plans detached expeditions—invasion and reduction of Rhode-Island—rapid successes of lord Cornwallis in the Jerseys—consternation and flight of the Americans—expect general Howe at Philadelphia—lord Cornwallis ordered into winter quarters—revival of American spirits from the cessation of pursuit—animated to most extraordinary exertions—their offensive operations—surprise of the Hessians at Trenton, and its important effects.—Operations on the lakes—Crown Point taken, but evacuated.—General result of the campaign.—Depredations of American privateers—encouraged by France and Spain.

THE principal scene of action in which Britain was now engaged, was the American colonies; thither, therefore, the history must call the attention of the reader. Boston, from the preceding summer, had continued in a state of blockade. Gage was returned home, and the command had devolved on general Howe. The British admiral having been displeased with the conduct of Falmouth, a sea-port town in the northern part of Massachusetts Bay, cannonaded and destroyed the place; and the provincials being informed of this proceeding, issued out letters of marque and reprisal, declaring, however, it was their intention to confine their hostilities to the capture of ships which should carry stores and provisions to the British army at Boston. Several vessels laden with necessaries of life, were taken at the very entrance of the harbour; the capture of the coal ships was severely felt, both from the coldness of the winter in that climate, and from that being a harder season than usual. Many of the inhabitants, who were known abettors of the American cause, were still retained as hostages, and all the loyalists who could escape, took refuge in Boston; thence there was not only a want of fresh meat, but even of salt provisions. To supply the deficiency of firing, they destroyed several houses, and used the materials; but still the scarcity increased. Aware of the difficulties, Washington prosecuted the siege with a double vigour, in order to take the place before the arrival of re-enforcements from Britain. On the 2d of March, a battery was opened on the western side of the town, whence it was dreadfully annoyed by a furious discharge of cannon and bombs: and on the 5th, another acted on the eastern shore. Nevertheless, the British troops acquitted themselves

[Proposed objects of the campaign. Americans evacuate Canada.]

with surprising fortitude, and during fourteen days, endured this bombardment with undaunted courage. The besieged had no alternative, but either to dislodge the Americans, or to evacuate the town. The general attempted to attack the enemy, but found they were so strongly posted as to render the assault impracticable. The British must have ascended a perpendicular eminence, on the top of which the Americans had prepared hogsheads chained together in great numbers, and filled with stones,* to roll down upon the king's troops as they climbed up the hill. Finding that they could not force the works of the American general, and being in the greatest distress for want of provisions, general Howe and the British loyalists embarked for Halifax on the 17th of March, and arrived there in the end of the month. By their departure, the Americans became masters of Boston, and a considerable quantity of artillery and stores, which general Howe was obliged to leave behind. Some ships were left in the bay, to protect the vessels which should arrive from England; but, as it afterwards appeared, they were not sufficient to prevent the British transports from falling into the hands of the enemy.

The objects proposed by the British government in the present campaign were three—to relieve Quebec, recover Canada, and invade the colonies through the lakes—to make an impression on the southern provinces, and to undertake an expedition to New-York. During these transactions at Boston, col. Arnold continued the blockade of Quebec, notwithstanding a very severe season, and under great difficulties; re-enforcements arrived very slowly from the congress, and the Canadians were disheartened and wavering; the succours, however, at last came, and Quebec being cut off from supplies by land, and the ice in the river not admitting assistance from England, the townsmen and garrison experienced many difficulties. But as the season advanced for the safe navigation of the river, the Americans became more active, that they might anticipate the arrival of the troops from England: they renewed the siege, and erected batteries to burn the shipping. While the besieged were engaged in attending to those operations, Arnold attempted to storm the town in another quarter, and made his entrance into the suburbs, but could not penetrate farther. Meanwhile, the small-pox, so pestilential in that country where inoculation was not common, broke out in the American army, and frightened many of the soldiers to desert. Although it was now the beginning of May, and the river was far from being clear of ice, an English squadron made its way up to Quebec, and on finding succours arrived, the besiegers retired. On the 9th of May, Carleton proceeded in pursuit of Arnold, just as they had begun the retreat. Seeing the troops, they left the artillery and military stores to the British, and thus the siege of Quebec was raised, after continuing about five months. Understanding that a number of sick and wounded provincials were scattered about the woods and villages, the governor issued a proclamation, ordering the proper officers to find out these miserable people, afford them relief and assistance at the public expense, and assure them that, on their recovery, they should have the

* "This species of preparation, (Mr. Stedman observes,) will exemplify in a striking manner that fertility of expedients which strongly characterized the Americans during the war."

[State of affairs in the Carolinas.]

liberty to return to their respective provinces. In the end of May, several regiments arriving from Ireland and England, together with a regiment from general Howe, and the Brunswick troops, which, when added to those who were before in the province, amounted to thirteen thousand men, Carleton prepared for offensive operations. The general rendezvous was at the Three Rivers, about half way between Montreal and Quebec. A body of Americans having attacked the advanced division of the British troops, was repulsed with great loss. General Burgoyne arrived with the re-enforcements in Canada, and was sent in pursuit of the provincials. Conscious of their inability to maintain their conquest, the provincials evacuated Montreal, Fort St. John, crossed lake Champlain, and stationed themselves at Crown Point, whither the British commander did not follow them for the present. While the campaign opened thus auspiciously for Britain in the north, attempts were made to re-establish her authority in the south. The governors of the several colonies had represented, that in the middle and southern provinces there was a considerable spirit of loyalty, but that the well affected were afraid to discover their sentiments; and that if a powerful force were sent from the mother country to co-operate with them, they would immediately attach themselves to her cause. In consequence of this information, an army was prepared, under the command of sir Henry Clinton and sir Peter Parker, and ordered to sail to North Carolina, from the loyalists of which, the most sanguine expectations were entertained.

Governor Martin of North Carolina, though obliged to take refuge in a ship, had been extremely active in the service of Britain: he maintained a correspondence with the settlers in the back country, especially with an unruly class of men, known by the name of regulators, who were inimical to orderly government, had formerly been very troublesome to the British establishment, and transferred to the provincials their hostility, since they had acquired the ascendancy. In the same parts, there was a totally different set of men, emigrants from the Highlands of Scotland, under the pressure of the most indigent circumstances, who were distinguished for loyalty to their sovereign, and attachment to their native land, which poverty and want had compelled them to abandon. Actuated by such contrary motives, to oppose the Americans, these two classes of settlers co-operated and acquired a considerable degree of force. Martin projected to unite with them all the back settlers of the southern colonies, and that the whole should act in conjunction with the king's troops, who were expected early in the spring, and also bring forward the Indians to assist the royal cause. By the desire of Martin, Mr. Macdonald, a Highland gentleman, of known courage, enterprise, and ability, directed and headed the execution of the scheme; the governor also issued a proclamation, commanding all persons on their allegiance to repair to the royal standard; but it was necessary to embody the loyalists, in order to keep them steady in their intentions; and this step ultimately disconcerted the undertaking. Their hopes of success rested on the concealment of the design, until his majesty's troops should arrive; but the formation of a corps, however, soon reached and alarmed the provincials. General Macdonald proposed to march to Wilmington, and there occupy a secure post, until the British landing should be able to afford them assistance. Informed of these proceed-

[Armament under sir Henry Clinton. Attempt upon Charleston]

ings, Mr. Moore, a provincial gentleman, and colonel of the Carolinians, advanced with a body of troops in quest of Macdonald. The Highlander sent Moore a copy of the king's proclamation; in answer to which, the provincial commander transmitted the test to the congress, promising (if they should subscribe to it) to treat Macdonald and his party as friends, but denouncing the severest vengeance in case of a refusal. The royalists losing time in negotiation, the provincials had leisure to assemble in great numbers to the standard of colonel Moore. Macdonald proceeding on his march, descried Mr. Caswell, a provincial colonel, who was hastening with a body of colonists to join the general, and found him posted at Moore's creek bridge upon Cape Fear river, not far from Wilmington. The emigrants with great fury began the attack with broad-swords; but colonel Macleod, the second in command, and others of their bravest officers being killed, the people, who, in the spirit of their native country regarded their leaders as chieftains, were disheartened by the fall of their commanders, and thrown into a confusion which reached the rest of the corps; the whole party was broken and dispersed, and, being pursued, many of them were taken prisoners, and among others, general Macdonald. Such was the issue of the first enterprise in the southern colonies for supporting the cause of the British government.

Among the causes which had contributed to the distinguished success of Mr. Secretary Pitt's belligerent measures, one of the most efficacious was promptness of preparation. This was a quality extremely deficient in the armaments that were employed during the ministry of lord North, and the forces sent out on an expedition were frequently too late for accomplishing their purpose. The troops destined to co-operate with the loyalists of the south, ought to have left Cork before Christmas, that they might reach Carolina in the beginning of spring, so as to be in the field before the commencement of the great heats that are so injurious to northern constitutions, unless gradually encountered; but they did not depart from Ireland till the 7th of February, and it was the 3d of May before they arrived at Cape Fear. General Clinton having joined them from Boston, took the command; and finding that from the discomfiture of the royalists he could have no hopes of success in North Carolina, resolved to make an attempt upon South Carolina, and to besiege Charleston its capital. This town was the great support of the warlike preparations in the southern colonies, and on account both of its strength and opulence, would be an important acquisition to Britain.

The harbour of Charleston was protected and commanded by a fort upon Sullivan's Island, which is formed by the conflux of the rivers Ashley and Cooper, that almost enclose the town; and an inlet of the sea. It was projected to capture that fort, and leaving a sufficient garrison for its defence, to intercept all intercourse between Charleston and the ocean. Clinton arrived on the 4th of June before the capital of South Carolina; the American commander Lee, having received accurate intelligence concerning the motion of the British general, by forced marches appeared about the same time in the neighbourhood of Charleston, and posting himself on the banks of the river, secured a communication with Sullivan's Island. Between Clinton and the fort lay Long Island, from which he understood there was a fordable passage to Sullivan's Island; he stationed himself on this

[Attack by the Americans upon the Bahamas. Internal acts of the colonies.]

island, constructed batteries, and prepared for the siege. Having made dispositions for commencing the attack, on the 28th of June he poured a tremendous fire from land batteries, floating batteries, and the ships. The British troops behaved with their usual valour, and the Americans displayed great courage and perseverance. Three of our ships having run aground, two of them were extricated; but the third sticking fast, was set on fire, to prevent her from falling into the hands of the enemy. The troops attempted the passage, but found that the water was not one foot in depth as they had been informed, but near seven feet; under cover, however, of the fire, they attempted to land, but it soon appeared that there were unexpected difficulties to encounter even if they did land. The information which the general had received concerning the access to the fort had been extremely inaccurate; there was between it and the shore a trench, in which he had understood that the water was shallow; but, on examination, it was discovered to be extremely deep, and also much more under the command of the castle than the general had supposed: the troops were for the present, therefore, ordered to return to their camp. The next day, dispositions were made for repeating the attempt, and there was a hot fire on both sides, by which two British ships being much damaged, were ordered to retire. The attempt was repeated in a part somewhat shallower than where the first trial had been made. General Clinton and several other officers waded up to their shoulders, but finding the depth of the water increasing, were unable to proceed; the ships could not approach so near as to do effectual execution, and general Lee was in great force on the other side to defend the forts: for all these reasons, Clinton thought it expedient to desist from the attempt. It was said by military critics, that the British general had not bestowed sufficient pains to investigate the situation and accessibility of the place before he commenced the attack; that his ships might have approached much nearer the fort, and covered the landing of the troops: by political critics it was alleged that the difficulties arose from the general causes which had been predicted; the determination and force of the Americans, inspired by the love of liberty, and thoroughly acquainted with the nature of the country and posts which they had to defend.

Lord Dunmore continued to carry on naval hostilities on the coasts of the southern provinces, but finding he could make no effectual impression, retired to Florida. The Americans, on the other hand, fitting out a squadron from Boston, attacked the Bahama islands, and plundered them of stores and artillery, by which means they brought to their country a supply which was very much wanted. Clinton was summoned by general Howe to meet him at New-York, but before we accompany the southern force to its junction with the commander-in-chief and the main army, it is proper to take a view of the civil proceedings in the colonies, which, both on account of their political importance and influence on military operations, merit and require historical notice.

In the former year, the provincial assembly of New-England had passed resolutions, manifesting a disposition to independency; but rather to feel the pulse of the other colonies and of their constituents, than to pledge themselves by an explicit proposition. Their delegates in the congress, and the other most violent members, having

[Recommendation of congress. Parties in the provinces.]

sounded the rest of the representatives, discovered, that from several colonies there was an aversion to that measure, and that a separation was regarded as one of the greatest evils, which ought not to be incurred unless absolutely necessary for the preservation of their liberty. Bred up in republicanism, the New-Englanders had deemed independence on a crowned head a desirable object; but other colonists, educated with monarchical principles, and attached to the king and people of Great Britain, regarded a connexion between themselves and the parent country as constituting the supreme advantages of both countries, and separation as only not so bad as slavery. The New-Englanders had been winning over the other colonies to their sentiments and principles, with great, but hitherto not complete success. The congress was becoming more and more subject to the influence of its republican president; but still desirous of peace, it waited with anxiety for the result of its petition to the king, and for the measures which should be adopted in parliament. When it was learned that no attention would be paid to the petition, that nothing short of unconditional submission would satisfy the British government, and that great armaments, including a numerous body of foreign mercenaries, were prepared in order to subjugate America, the greater number of delegates adopted the sentiments which were first generated and afterwards cherished by the New-Englanders. On the 30th of May, a prefatory resolution was passed, declaring, that the prohibitory act by which they were excluded from the protection of the crown, the rejection of their petition for redress and reconciliation, with the intended exertion of all the British forces, assisted by foreign mercenaries, for their destruction, depriving the colonies of the king's protection, annihilated their allegiance; that it became now necessary for them to take the power of government into their own hands. It was therefore resolved, "to recommend to the various assemblies and conventions in the United States of America, where no form of government adequate to the exigencies of affairs had yet been adopted, to form such a constitution as should be most conducive to the public welfare and security."

In the middle and southern provinces, of those who were determined to resist coercion, there were two parties: the one wished merely to oppose all acts of hostility, but still to leave room for reunion;* the other resolved not only to resist, but to outrage the British government. In a state of public ferment, moderation is generally regarded as lukewarmness, and indifference as enmity to the prevailing sentiment. In most of the colonial assemblies, being guided by the advice of the congress, they instructed their delegates to support independence. In Pennsylvania and Maryland,† the assemblies resolved to oppose this measure; and the amount of their reasoning was—Britain has oppressed, and is attempting to subdue America, it becomes us therefore to resist, but the necessity of resistance does not justify measures injurious to ourselves, and not necessary to render our resistance effectual; we can fight as well without mentioning independence, as after declaring it; we will not actually obey the commands of Britain, while inconsistent with our constitutional rights, but we ought not therefore to preclude the possibility of a re-

* Annual Register, 1776, p. 163. † Andrews, vol. ii. p. 209.

[Declaration of Independence.]

conciliation,* by a change in the British counsels, which experience of the inefficacy of her plans may in time be expected to produce; meanwhile our efforts shall be as energetic as those of the most zealous votary of independence. The separation from Britain, even if finally attainable, would be productive of great and evident evils. The protection of the parent state, the salutary power of a common sovereign to balance so many separate and possibly discordant provinces, the important political and commercial advantages of the old union appeared in a striking light to every man of discernment, whose mind was not clouded by the passions that overspread the multitude; but no art was spared to make the contrary opinion popular, and no means were more successful than publications which, by enumerating the various acts of alleged oppression, stimulated the hatred and resentment of the children against their parents. Of these works one of the most effectual was an essay of the noted Thomas Paine, written in the style and spirit which he has so frequently exhibited, strong, coarse, and inflammatory. The bold and unqualified intrepidity of assertion passed, with undisciplined understandings, as unanswerable arguments; familiarity of illustration, and vulgarity of allusion, highly pleased unrefined tastes; an appeal to their prejudices and prepossessions gratified their passions, and they concluded that he must be right whose opinions and sentiments agreed with their own.† Displaying an ability and skill, the amount of which was, that *he could set fire to combustibles*, Paine's address acted powerfully on the populace of Philadelphia, and contributed to inspire them with different sentiments from their provincial assembly and their delegates in the congress. The delegates, however, thought it necessary on so important a question to take the sense of their constituents, and after a great contest it was carried that they should be instructed to agree to the determination of congress. Notwithstanding the artifices of demagogues, there still remained in Philadelphia a considerable body inimical to independence. In Maryland, the delegates were instructed to oppose the question of independence in congress. Having accordingly voted against it, they were driven from the assembly; and, on returning home, they found the violent party gaining ground. A second meeting of constituents was called, and they returned with instructions to vote for independence. On the 4th of July, the congress of delegates from thirteen English colonies in America, declared the provinces a free and independent state. In the declaration, they commenced with observing, that when it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected it with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth the separate and equal station to which the laws of nature, of nations, and of God, entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the cause which impels them to the separation. Government being an institution for the happiness of the governed, whenever it becomes destructive of that end, must be dissolved. Having laid down this general rule, they proceeded to enumerate the facts which, in their opinion, proved the British government of our colonies to have been destructive to its end, and

* Annual Register, 1776, p. 164. † Ramsay, vol. i. p. 336.

‡ See state papers, July 4th, 1776.

[Enthusiastic reception by the people. Opinions of Washington.]

comprised in the detail all the acts already mentioned : in every stage of oppression, they alleged, that they humbly petitioned the king for redress, but with no effect. "We have applied also (they said) to our British brethren ; we have reminded them of the circumstances of our emigration and settlement ; we have appealed to their native justice and magnanimity, and conjured them by the ties of our common kindred to disavow those usurpations which would inevitably interrupt our connexion and correspondence : they have been deaf to the voice of justice and of consanguinity ; we must therefore acquiesce in the necessity which denounces our separation, and hold them as we hold the rest of mankind—in war, enemies ; in peace, friends." For these reasons, they solemnly published, that they were henceforth free and independent states, and absolved from allegiance to the British crown : that all political connexion between them and Great Britain was and ought to be completely terminated ; that they had full power to levy war, conclude peace, contract alliances, establish commerce, and do every other act which belonged to independent states. This celebrated declaration, which separated the colonies from Britain, was received with enthusiastic applause by the people, but by some of the wisest opponents of the mother country it was not equally relished. General Washington himself, though so strenuous and efficacious a supporter of American resistance to what he conceived oppression and tyranny, never, as far as I can learn, expressed an approbation of the total dissolution of the connexion between the colonies and the mother country.* His great and comprehensive mind viewed remote and distant objects ; he saw that whatever was the enmity between Britain and America at present, it must at length terminate. He knew the vast advantages that had accrued, and the greater which might proceed from the renewal of friendly relations between Britain and North America ; their language, their respective objects and pursuits fitted them for a reciprocity of benefit, if united, which he did not apprehend they could enjoy if separated. Distinguished as a champion of liberty, he was its champion with the principles and discrimination of a wise man : he loved freedom secured by order,

* In the original impression, I had written that general Washington *was far from approving of an entire dissolution of the connexion*. That opinion I founded partly on the general wisdom and moderation of that illustrious American, and the enmity which his conduct uniformly exhibited to democratic violence ; and partly on a letter for many years imputed to him, and inserted in a publication, which, till very lately, passed for genuine. The work in question is entitled, "Epistles, Domestic, Confidential, and Official, from general Washington ;" and was long current, as its contents were probable, and its averments remained uncontradicted. The letter from which I made the citation inserted in a note, pages 469 and 470, of vol. i. had been, with five others, denied by general Washington, in an American gazette, to be genuine, a short time before his death. This disavowal I did not hear of, till several months after the publication of the work, when Mr. Bleecker, of New-York, wrote me, that the epistles in question were spurious, and referred me to the gazette in which they were disavowed by general Washington. Far from wishing to impute any expression to any character in my history which he did not use, I am desirous of correcting the error respecting that fact ; and for that purpose have directed the quotation from the alleged letter to Mr. Lund Washington to be cancelled, and the present explanation substituted in its place.

My general opinion, however, that Washington, so eminent for wisdom and moderation, was an enemy to democratic violence, not resting on one letter, but on the whole tenour of his conduct, continues the same.

[The declaration naturally resulting from the measures of the British government.]

and was a profound admirer of the British constitution : he did not therefore favour the democratical principles which, first spread by the New-Englanders, had extended through the colonies ; he foresaw that the constitution resulting from independence would be republican, and might from the influence of democratic zealots be inconsistent with tranquillity and order. He therefore did not enter into the violence which was manifested by many abettors of independence. Engaged, however, in conducting military affairs, he did not deem himself necessitated publicly to declare every opinion which he might form upon the civil and political proceedings of his countrymen ; and without agreeing with every demagogue that could agitate and inflame the populace, he continued to support his country, in defending what he thought her liberty : some of her counsels and resolutions might not meet his approbation, but was he therefore to desert her in war and danger ? As a patriot, he employed his talents not only in endeavouring to extricate her from danger and difficulty, but in sacrificing his own particular sentiments for the sake of unanimity and the general welfare.

Writers favourable to the coercion of America affirm, that independence was long before that period the aim of their leaders ; but being able to adduce no testimony or documents in support of their assertion, rest its weight on probable inferences from their conduct. "Hence, (says a late historian,)* their complaints of grievances were clamorous, frequent, and specific, while their professions of attachment and loyalty were merely general, and attended with no precise offers of conciliation or satisfaction." The American statement of grievances, in their petitions to the king, and other representations, were no doubt specific ; if they had been vague, they would have been nugatory. Their professions of loyalty and attachment were attended with no precise offers of conciliation or satisfaction, because in their view they were suffering unconstitutional injury, and prayed for constitutional redress : they were reclaiming a right, and not making proposals for a bargain. They did not conceive themselves to have committed injustice against the British government, and therefore made no offers of satisfaction, either precise or general. Their propositions of conciliation were simple : they apprehended that the new system of legislature was a violation of their privileges as British subjects, and declared that they would return to amity when, by the discontinuance of the present measures, their constitutional blessings should be restored. How entreaties or even requisitions that their connexion with the mother country should be replaced on the former footing, demonstrate an intention of entirely dissolving the tie, it is difficult to discover. A farther argument to evince the American desire of independence is, that their demand of redress in the repeal of all the acts since 1763, must be insincere, for it could not be expected to be successful. "No party in Britain could attempt conciliation on such grounds : *because*, thereby they must have abandoned some principle : " the amount of which reasoning is, that if a statesman or lawgiver has proposed or adopted any measure or regulation, he must adhere to his resolution, that he may preserve his consistency ; a doctrine which, in such fallible beings as men, might often contravene the plainest dictates of justice and wisdom. In the colonial range of complaint, therefore, I can per-

* Adolphus, vol. ii. p. 171.

[Objects and reasons of the expedition to New-York.]

ceive no proofs of determined separation. From the series of acts which the narrative has presented, it appears that the New-Englanders, since the commencement of the disputes, manifested dispositions to republicanism, from which we might fairly infer a desire, and even a design of eventual separation; but that the middle and southern colonies were the votaries of loyal and constitutional connexion and subordination; that their co-operation with the colonists of the north, was the immediate effect of the system of 1774; that their subsequent resistance arose from refused redress, and attempted coercion; and their consent to the scheme of independence, from the total rejection of all their applications, combined with elation for the successes of the former campaign. The independence of America, therefore, whether wise or unwise, evidently proceeded from no preconcerted design, but was a natural consequence of the measures that were pursued by the mother country, and the progress of human passions, when they refuse the admonitions of reason and wisdom: from disputes to quarrels, repeated with increasing asperity, until they terminated in a final rupture.

The main object of military operations was New-York; and for making this part of America the chief seat of war, there were various reasons. The province of New-York, running north-west joins with Canada, that runs south-west, and both together enclose New-England, and divide it from the southern colonies. By possessing New-York and the southern part of the province, while the Canadian army invaded it on the north, a communication, it was conceived, might be established between the secondary and primary army; both could co-operate vigorously, easily reduce New-England, afterwards act in concert against the more southern colonies, and procure the assistance of the back settlers, many of whom were well disposed to the mother country. New-York was a central position, from which operations might be directed either to the one side or the other, as occasion might serve, or circumstances require, so that this position enabled the British commander to prescribe the scene of action, and to quit it when he chose; and if the army were withdrawn from the field, the great north river, and the different channels between the islands and the main land, would enable him by his ships and detachments, to harass the adjoining countries; while the provincials, however powerful, could make no attempt upon the islands that would not be attended with greater inconveniences, and liable to imminent danger. Besides these advantages, Long Island was very fertile in wheat and all other corns, abounded with herbs and flocks, and was deemed almost equal alone to the maintenance of an army. In the province, especially in the upper part towards Albany, there were reported to be many loyalists, who would flock to the British standard as soon as they could manifest their sentiments safely. New-York, from these circumstances, was an object of high importance, and its attainment was not reckoned difficult: much the better part of the province is enclosed in islands, which being long and narrow, were exposed on all sides to attacks from our fleets, and to the descents of our troops; and when conquered, the protection of the ships of war would be as effectual in their preservation, as their hostility had been in their reduction. These were the reasons on which the military plan was founded, and whatever the sentiments of the reader may be respecting the wisdom of the statesman who proposed, and the lawgivers who adopted the measures which pro-

[Arrival of the British armament. Description of New-York.]

duced enmities between America and the mother country, he will probably without hesitation admit, that the plan of military operation was not discreditable to the talents of its author as a war minister. But the history now proceeds to narrate its execution.

General Howe was obliged to remain at Halifax for two months, to receive re-enforcements which he expected from England, with a fleet commanded by his brother, lord Howe; the armament from England much exceeded the time that had been planned for its departure from home. The general, therefore, resolved to wait no longer at Halifax, but to proceed southwards, that there might be no delay after lord Howe should reach America. Leaving Halifax on the 11th June, in the end of the month he arrived in Sandy Hook near New-York. During his passage, he was joined by six transports full of Highland troops, belonging to the forty-second and seventy-first regiments; from them he learned that colonel Campbell with a detachment was separated from the rest of the armament: he afterwards found, that going into Boston, where they expected to have joined the British army, they were taken prisoners by the provincials.

The town of New-York is situated in an island running from north to south, at the mouth of the Hudson river, at the southern extremity, separated from New-York island by a narrow channel; on the east, is Long Island; directly south, in sight, but at a greater distance, is Staten Island; beyond which, and in the same direction, lies Sandy Hook. The Americans having been informed of the destination of the British armament, had been at great pains to fortify New-York town and island, and to make the access as difficult as possible, by sinking ships in the most approachable part of the channel; they were also provided with a numerous artillery, and guarded by a strong body of troops. On the northern extremity of New-York island, it communicated with the continent by a bridge, called Kingsbridge. Long Island, from its extent, was not so strongly fortified, yet was well guarded, had an encampment on the side next New-York, and also works on the most accessible parts of the coast. Staten Island being less valuable, was not guarded with equal strength and vigilance: thither, therefore, he proceeded, and landed without opposition: he met with Mr. Tryon, late governor of New-York, and other loyalists, who informed him of the disposition of the province, and strength of the enemy. From the accounts which he received of the provincial force, he found that it would be impracticable to commence hostilities until the armament from England should arrive. It was the 14th of July before lord Howe reached Staten Island: the troops that were conveyed in the fleet consisted of twenty regiments of foot, and a regiment of light dragoons, and also the Hessian auxiliaries: so re-enforced, the British army amounted to near thirty thousand men. The commanders possessed high characters, and had distinguished themselves in subordinate stations of trust and importance in the former war. The naval officer had, in the year 1758, on the coast of France, laid the foundation of a fame which was increased during subsequent services: the military gentleman was the distinguished favourite of general Wolfe, led the body which first seized the heights of Abraham,* and afterwards supported and advanced the estimation in which he was held. It was

* See this volume, p. 102.

[Pacific overtures of the British commanders rejected.]

true, he never had an opportunity of signalizing himself as a general, except at Bunker's hill; and having acted there under the command of another, he merely proved, as before, that he was an active and intrepid soldier: but from his conduct in secondary situations, he was very naturally allowed credit for abilities which could fill up the first with equal propriety. From their near relation, no doubt was entertained that there would be the utmost harmony between the general and admiral; and the appointment of lord Howe and sir William to the chief command of the naval and military operations, afforded general satisfaction in England, and the most sanguine expectations were entertained of their success. It must be acknowledged, that their hopes were not without apparently probable grounds. The American army did not exceed twenty thousand,* raw and undisciplined,† to oppose thirty thousand veterans. These were unprovided with the various accommodations and even necessities of a military life, whereas the British forces were abundantly supplied with every article that could be useful in warfare.

Besides their military powers, the general and admiral were appointed, under the late act of parliament, the commissioners for restoring peace to the colonies, and for granting pardon to such as should deserve the royal mercy. Before they commenced hostile operations, they tried pacific proposals; and their first act was a circular letter from lord Howe to the late governors of the several provinces, acquainting them with the power which was intrusted to his brother, and accompanied with a declaration to the public to a similar effect. His lordship, at the same time, sent a letter to the American general, addressed to George Washington, esq. which that commander refused to receive, as it did not describe the rank that he held under the United States.‡ On the 20th of August, general Howe sent his adjutant general, Patterson, with a letter addressed to George Washington, &c. &c. &c. The general received them with great politeness, but absolutely declined to accept an official letter without an address naming his office. A conference, however, ensued, in which nothing effectual was done. General Washington said, the power of the commissioners appeared to be no more than to grant pardons: they were only defending what they deemed their indisputable right, had committed no fault, and therefore wanted no pardon. Dr. Franklin had for many years resided in England as agent for the colonies of Massachusetts and Pennsylvania; he was lately returned to America, and being a member of the congress, possessed very great influence. Lord Howe addressed a letter to him soon after his arrival at Staten Island; therein stated the nature of his commission, expressed his hopes that America would unite with the British in dispositions for peace, and requested the assistance of Doctor Franklin to effect this purpose. Franklin replied, by informing his lordship, that preparatory to any propositions of amity or peace, it would be required that Britain should acknowledge the independence of America, defray the expenses of the war, and indemnify the colonies for burning their towns. A correspondence also

* See Stedman.

† See general Washington's letter to Mr. Lund Washington.

‡ This conduct was highly applauded by the congress, which passed a resolution, directing, that for the future no commander in their service should receive any letters or message from the enemy which did not acknowledge in its address their official character.

[Military operations. Battle of Long-Island.]

took place between lord Howe and lord Drummond, which the latter communicated to general Washington ; but it was equally unavailing, the same arguments being used on the side of Britain, met with the same objections on the side of America.

These overtures of Britain being unavailing, and the re-enforcements being now arrived, the British commanders opened the campaign on the 22d of August, a very late season, especially in a country in which winter sets in soon and severely ; but as it evidently arose from the tardiness with which troops arrived from Europe, the delay was not imputable to the commanders in America. The British forces began with an attempt to reduce Long Island ; and a division of four thousand men, crossing from Staten Island, under cover of three frigates and two bomb-ketches, landed there without resistance in Gravesend Bay, adjoining the strait that separates the two islands. The detachment having effected its purpose, the rest of the army without difficulty effected their landing. The Americans were posted near Red-Hook, almost opposite to New-York, commanded by general Putnam. The road from Gravesend to Red-Hook lay across Flatbush, a woody tract of land, behind which a ridge of hills arise. General Putnam had sent a great body of troops to seize the defiles which led through those eminences. Lord Cornwallis advanced towards the pass, but finding it already seized by the enemy, in conformity to orders which he had received, he refrained from an attack. Major-general Grant commanded the left wing that extended to the coast. The Hessians under general de Heister composing the centre, advanced to Flatbush, while the commander in chief, with the greater part of the British forces, marched to the right over Flatland. General Clinton and sir William Erskine having reconnoitred the position of the enemy, and finding also that their attention was chiefly directed towards the Hessians, reported to general Howe, that they thought it would not be difficult to turn the left flank of the provincials, and thereby force them either to hazard a battle, or abandon the hills. Thinking the proposal practicable, the general consented. It was concerted, that to favour the design of the right wing, the attack should be begun by general Grant and the Hessians on the left and centre. Farther to draw off the attention of the enemy from the principal movement, the king's ships stationed to the right of them moved towards the town, so as to make them conceive New-York to be the immediate object.

On the 26th of August, at nine o'clock in the evening, general Clinton, lord Cornwallis, and lord Percy, advanced with part of the troops, and general Howe himself brought forward the rest of that division. At nine in the morning, the British passed the heights ; general Clinton turned the left of the enemy, and crossed to Bedford, while Grant and De Heister attacked the right and the centre. On the side of Flatbush, the Americans made a vigorous resistance ; but their left wing, finding itself attacked both on flank and rear, was thrown into confusion, and fled in all directions. The centre and right of the provincials, hearing of this total rout of the left, suddenly retreated in disorder ; about two thousand of the enemy were killed, and one thousand taken prisoners. Among the captured were, generals Sullivan, Udell, and lord Stirling : about three hundred British were killed and wounded. Of the slain were, lieutenant-colonel Grant and sir Alexander Murray, both officers of great

[Masterly retreat of Washington.]

merit; the latter a young Scottish baronet* of independent fortune, who leaving the comforts of ease and affluence for hardship and danger, earned a premature, but glorious death in the service of his king and country. General Washington had been at New-York when the engagement began; hearing that a battle had commenced, he hastened over to the assistance of his countrymen; but when he arrived, he found his troops involved in difficulties by the stratagem of the enemy. On seeing their situation, he did not doubt but they would be entirely destroyed, as he conceived general Howe would certainly attack, and as certainly force, the American lines. Many of the British officers and soldiers were of the same opinion. Confident, however, that they must be reduced by regular approaches, without risking the loss that might be sustained by an assault, the general declined the attempt. On the evening of the 27th, the British army opened the intrenchments before the American lines: the provincials finding it impossible to maintain their post in Long Island, on the 29th evacuated their encampment, and general Washington executed the retreat with great ability; his troops were withdrawn from the camp and the different works, and with the baggage, stores, and part of the artillery, were conveyed to the water side, they embarked, and passed over a long ferry to New-York with such wonderful silence and order, that the British army did not perceive the least motion, and were surprised in the morning at finding the lines abandoned, and seeing the last of the rear guard in their boats and out of danger. To do full justice to this masterly retreat, it must be considered that they had been driven to the corner of an island where they were enclosed in a space of two square miles, with near twenty thousand well disciplined troops in front; and in the rear, an arm of the sea a mile wide, which could not be crossed but in several embarkations. Notwithstanding these obstacles, the provincials did not lose a single man, and carried off the greater part of their provisions, ammunition, and artillery. Military critics were of opinion, that sir William Howe might have forced their lines on the day of the battle; and, since he chose the more gradual operation of a siege, and must have known that from their reduced force it was their interest to withdraw, he might have divined it to be their wish; therefore, it was to be expected that he would have been so vigilant as to render their retreat impracticable; and such a prevention would have been by no means difficult, because the sea between Red Hook and New-York is deep enough for a seventy-four gun-ship to anchor, and he might have easily stationed frigates which would have commanded the passage, and prevented their escape.† The boats which had brought them from New-York to Long Island, had laid on the Long Island shore three days after their defeat, in readiness to carry them over to New-York. These, it is affirmed, might have been easily destroyed by the British; but they did not experience the smallest annoyance.

Possessed of Long Island, the English army had the command of New-York, and made preparations for a descent upon the island: two brigades of Hessians, and one British being left at Bedford, the rest of the army was posted at Newtown, Hellgate, Bushwick, and Flushing. On the west side of Long Island, opposite to Horan's Hook, where the enemy had thrown up strong works, two batteries were erected.‡ This

* Representative of the family of Balmano in Perthshire.

† See Stedman.

‡ Stedman, vol. i. p. 199.

[Conciliatory propositions. Proclamation of lord Howe.]

work commanded Hellgate, a passage between the islands of Buchanan, Montesor, and the Two Brothers, into the sound which separates Long Island from New-York and the Connecticut shore. The English batteries, in a short time, not only silenced the fire of the enemy from the work, but broke it up entirely, and rendered it utterly indefensible.

While these preparation were going on, the British commanders again made overtures for peace. General Sullivan was dismissed on his parole, and despatched to Philadelphia, to submit to the congress some propositions, whereby lord Howe expressed a wish to confer with several moderate members, not as deputies from an independent state, but private gentlemen of influence in the colonies, that in these conferences they might adjust preliminaries for an accommodation of differences: he strongly insisted, that this was a favourable crisis, as neither party were reduced to a state of humiliation, so as to preclude discussion and modification of terms. The congress replied, that they could not send their members to confer with him as private gentlemen, but they would depute a committee to learn whether his lordship was authorized to treat with persons appointed by congress: if that were the case, the committee would receive such proposals; and accordingly doctor Benjamin Franklin, Messrs. John Adams, and Edward Rutledge, were the committee appointed to confer with lord Howe on this subject. Howe still adhered to the contents of the message which he sent by general Sullivan: the committee informed him that they could not, nor should not, act but as deputies from the congress; nevertheless they were desirous of hearing what proposals he had to make. His lordship told them, that the king and government of Great Britain anxiously wished to finish the dissensions between Britain and the colonies. To accomplish this desirable end, the obnoxious acts should be revised, and every just cause of complaint removed, if America would declare her willingness to submit to the authority of Britain. The committee replied, that an acknowledgment of British superiority could not now be expected: petitions, his lordship must remember, had been presented by the colonies to the king and parliament, but had been disregarded and despised; America had not separated herself from Britain, but Britain from America. The colonies had not declared themselves independent, till the parent country had declared war: the subjects had not renounced allegiance, until the sovereign had withdrawn protection: even were the congress willing to replace America in the situation which she held in 1763, that body was not competent to execute such intentions: independence was declared in consequence of the collective voice of the people, by whom alone it could be annulled: but though the Americans did not desire to return under the dominion of England, they were willing to enter into any treaty which might be advantageous to both. From this answer, lord Howe, seeing that America was determined to persist in independence, put an end to the conference. He soon after published a declaration to the people of America, in which, he offered pardon and protection to all who should return to their former submission and obedience; and acquainted them, that it was his majesty's intention to consent to the revival of such acts as might aggrieve his subjects. The proclamation, however, produced very little effect; the concession was too late, and the sword only could decide the contest.

The two armies were divided by the East river, about thirteen hundred

[Capture of New-York. Movements of Washington.]

yards in breadth; and, after a long and severe cannonade, it was resolved, that the first division of the army should, on the 15th of September, enter the island of New-York. Accordingly, commanded by general Clinton, lord Cornwallis, major-general Vaughan, brigadier-general Leslie, and the Hessian colonel Donop, they embarked at the head of New-town-bay, which deeply indents Long Island, and where they were out of sight of the enemy. Being covered by five ships of war, on their entrance into the river they proceeded to Kipp's Bay, about three miles north of New-York; where, being less expected than in some other places, the preparation for defence was not so great: the works, however, were neither feeble nor destitute of troops, but the fire from the ships was so incessant and so well conducted, that they were soon abandoned, and the army landed without opposition. The enemy immediately abandoned the city of New-York, and all their posts on the south part of the island, and retired towards the north, where their strength chiefly lay. The Americans had resolved, if the English obtained possession of New-York, previous to the evacuation to set it on fire; but they were obliged to leave it too quickly to carry their designs into execution. Some incendiaries, however, secreted themselves in deserted houses, and contrived to set fire to the town in several places. On the morning of the 21st of September, about a third part of the town was destroyed; and it was owing to the extraordinary exertion of the soldiers, that the whole was not consumed.

The general had fortified Kingsbridge, in order to secure a retreat; and the works on both sides of the passage were so strong, that they appeared to defy all attempts on either. At Kingsbridge, ten thousand of the Americans were posted, and six thousand five hundred at Haerlem, near New-York. The whole force was so advantageously disposed, as to render an attack dangerous from New-York. General Howe, finding he could make no impression on them in that quarter, resolved to attack them from another: he proposed to move a great part of his army to the continent behind Kingsbridge, in the rear of the enemy, on the side whence they derived their provision; but to retain possession of New-York by a strong garrison, protected in front by a chain of redoubts, and in the rear and on both the sides by the fleet. This manœuvre would compel the provincials either to hazard a battle, or be confined in New-York island, cut off by the army or fleet from every supply of provisions, the ships guarding the passage from the Jerseys, while the troops possessed the country adjoining Kingsbridge. On the 12th of October, general Howe embarked his troops, crossed over to the continent towards Connecticut, and landed on Frog's Neck, near West Chester: here he was obliged to wait five days for stores from Staten Island; and on the 18th, receiving information that Pell's Point would be a more convenient place for landing, the British re-embarked, and came ashore at the mouth of Hutchinson's river, whence they advanced up the country. Extending from East Chester to New-Rochelle, there are two roads to Connecticut, the lower near the sea, the upper through high grounds called the White Plains. The lower route was, by their last movement, in possession of his majesty's troops; and they now prepared to seize the higher. Meanwhile general Washington discovered that if he remained in his present position, he would be obliged to hazard a general battle, which might be in its event decisively fatal to the colonies, as there could be no possibi-

[Retreat of the Americans. Capture of Fort Washington.]

lity of a retreat. His army was originally inferior in force and discipline to the royal host, and now reduced by recent defeat and sickness, it was still more dispirited: from the same causes, great animosities prevailed between the troops of the northern and the southern colonies. As victory was little to be expected in such circumstances, it was Washington's object to avoid a battle if possible; but if an engagement was inevitable, to change his ground, that he might have the greater probability of securing a retreat. Leaving therefore New-York island, he posted his army, about seventeen thousand in number, near Kingsbridge, and occupied the ground from thence to White Plains, having the river Brunx in front, and detached eight thousand men to occupy the eastern bank; on the 26th, crossing with his whole army, he occupied a very strong position.

On the 28th of October, the royal army, which consisted of thirteen thousand men, leaving its encampment, advanced in two columns; general Clinton commanding the right, general de Heister the left. They found the Americans encamped on a long ridge of hill, on the brow of which they had hastily constructed lines. A bend of the Brunx protected the right flank, and another turning surrounded the rear of the right wing. The left wing was posted on uneven ground, steep and rugged in front, but affording a secure retreat in the rear. The most accessible part was the centre, the slope of the hill being there gradual, the lines not fraised, and the ditches, from the rockiness of the soil and the shortness of the time, necessarily shallow. A body of provincials posted on the other side of the Brunx, commanded a ford opposite to the right flank. General Howe, informed of the position of this detachment and judging that it was stationed there to cover the right flank, sent a body of troops across the river, with a view to dislodge the enemy from their rising ground, gall the flank which would be thus left defenceless, and thereby facilitate the operations in front of the camp. The troops sent upon that service under general Leslie and colonel Donop, consisting both of British and Hessians, vied with each other in courage and expedition, passed the ford in the face of the enemy's fire, formed on the bank, marched with alacrity and vigour up the hill, charged the enemy with their bayonets, and drove them from their works. General Howe, in the mean time, made no attempt to attack the enemy's lines, or to force their main body to battle. During the night, the provincials drew back their encampment, and thereby strengthened their entrenchments; whereupon the British commander thought it unwise to make a general assault until some fresh troops should arrive from York island. On the 30th, the expected re-enforcement came, and the general professed an intention of attacking the camp next morning. A heavy rain having fallen during the night, he judged the ground too slippery on so steep a hill for being attempted, therefore that day the assault was deferred. The succeeding night the provincials evacuated their camp, and retired back into the country; after having in their retreat set fire to all the houses on White Plains, they took possession of the high ground towards North Castle. General Howe, conceiving the enemy could not be drawn to an engagement, judged it expedient to pursue them no farther, and employed himself in reducing Kingsbridge and Fort Washington, that he might be master of the whole of New-York island. The last of these posts was very important, as it secured an immediate intercourse with the Jersey shore, and commanded the navigation of the

[Progress of the British. Capture of general Lee.]

North river. Sensible of the value of this place, the provincials had garrisoned it with three thousand men, commanded by colonel Magaw. On the 15th of November, the fort was summoned to surrender; but the commander answered that he would defend it to the last extremity: it was therefore resolved to attempt a storm. Next morning the royalists made an assault in four divisions; the first, consisting of Hessians, was conducted by general Kynphausen, on the north side of the three others, being British troops; the second was led by general Matthew, supported and covered by lord Cornwallis; the third was conducted by colonel Stirling; and the forty-second regiment, the last, by lord Percy. The Hessians were obliged to pass through a wood in which the enemy were very advantageously posted; a hot engagement taking place in the ascent of a hill, they made their way through the thicket, and climbed to the top of an eminence. The other divisions were equally active and successful; the royal Highlanders particularly distinguished themselves: before they landed from the continent, they were exposed to a heavy fire from the American batteries; and these continued to play upon them as they were ascending a steep hill. The heroes bore all with firmness and perseverance, gained the summit, and after an obstinate resistance, took one hundred and seventy prisoners: the enemy, unable to resist any longer, surrendered at discretion. By the capture of Fort Washington, and the surrender of Kingsbridge which followed soon after, the British troops were in possession not only of New-York and the adjacent islands, but also of an easy access either to New-England or the Jerseys. Thus situated, general Howe planned two expeditions, one under lord Cornwallis to the Jerseys, another under sir Henry Clinton to Rhode Island. General Clinton and sir Peter Parker commanded an expedition to Rhode Island: the provincials abandoned it at their approach, and they took possession of the province, which was deemed a very advantageous acquisition, since it had been a great rendezvous for privateers, that had captured a considerable number of British ships. On the 18th of November, lord Cornwallis crossed over to the Jersey shore with about five thousand men, and landed eight miles above Fort Lee; when they had almost surprised the garrison, and made the enemies prisoners of war; but a deserter informing the Americans of the approach of the king's troops, they evacuated the fort with great expedition, leaving to the British their provisions and artillery. His lordship now penetrated into East and West Jersey, and took possession of the principal towns as far as Brunswick. The American troops fled before him in the greatest dismay. In this career of success and pursuit, he was arrested by an order from the commander in chief, to prevent him from advancing farther. From the consternation of the provincial forces in the Jerseys, it was the general opinion of military men, that if lord Cornwallis had been permitted to proceed, he would have taken Philadelphia.

General Washington commanded the troops in the Jerseys and on the Delaware; Lee was intrusted with a body of forces in the province of New-York, and having conceived Washington's situation to be dangerous, resolved to cross the North river, and form a junction with him, as they marched westwards towards the Delaware. On the 13th of December he quitted his camp, in order to reconnoitre the enemy; in the course of this employment, being about three miles distant from his army, he stopped at a house to breakfast. General Howe had despatched colonel

[Constitution of the Americans.]

Harcourt to obtain intelligence concerning general Lee's route and motions. Having traced him as he advanced, he determined still longer to watch his progress. In the course of this service, he intercepted a countryman carrying a letter from general Lee, by which he found where he was ; learning also that he was slightly guarded, he projected to carry him off, and galloping with his party to the place where Lee had halted, took effectual means to prevent his escape, forced open the doors, made him a prisoner, and conveyed him to the commander-in-chief at New-York. The Americans severely felt the loss of this general, who possessed great abilities and very extensive knowledge ; he had formerly been a lieutenant-colonel in the British service, had served with reputation in the seven years war both in America and Portugal, and was highly esteemed for his military conduct. A restless disposition, and a fortune which enabled him to gratify his inclinations, had induced him after the peace to travel ; he traversed most of the continent of Europe, visited the various courts, and was well acquainted with the respective governments, customs, manners, and languages of the several nations. Being disgusted by some persons in the British administration, he, on the first disturbances in America, crossed the Atlantic, and offered his services to the congress. His proposals were received with joy, and he was appointed major-general. By his talents, activity, and skill, he had been eminently useful in disciplining the American troops, and greatly contributed to support the provincial cause. This able man was by no means without his defects ; he disbelieved and ridiculed revealed and even natural religion, was loose in his moral principles, and profligate in his character : his very efforts in the service of the colonies arose from unworthy motives ; because he conceived some ground of displeasure against persons employed under the British government, he made war against his king and native country. There being no British officer of equal rank a prisoner with the Americans, general Washington offered six field officers in exchange for Lee : but general Howe answered, that he was a deserter from the British service, and therefore could not be considered as a prisoner of war. Washington contended, that having resigned his commission before he accepted of a command in the provincial service, the general was not a deserter. Howe adhered to his resolution, and would not release him, but kept him a close prisoner. This rigorous conduct produced retaliation on the other side : colonel Campbell, who had been before treated as befitted his condition, was the first who experienced disagreeable effects, owing to the British treatment of Lee ; he was now confined in a dungeon, and the other officers, though not handled with such severity, underwent very great hardships.

The affairs of the provincials appeared now to be in a desperate situation : by the orders of the general to lord Cornwallis, they had been suffered to cross the Delaware ; but no doubt was entertained that, as soon as the river was frozen over, not only a detachment, but the whole army under Howe himself, would advance in pursuit of the discomfited and flying enemy, proceed to Philadelphia, and for so important an object, and with such probability of complete success, brave all the hazards and hardships of a winter campaign. The soldiers were quite disheartened ; the panic extended itself to the civil departments : the governor, council, assembly, and magistracy of New-Jersey deserted their province ; their brethren of Philadelphia dispersed ; and the congress expecting the

[Firmness of congress. Howe returns into winter quarters.]

speedy arrival of the British army, fled to Maryland. Three of the principal citizens, in the name of the rest, declared their resolution to entreat the protection of general Howe. The chief city of North America, the seat of the new government, appeared ready to submit, if the British army should advance. Alarmed at these dangers, congress did not, however, despair; they proceeded not only to repair their actual losses, but to remove the causes. Their soldiers had only been enlisted for a year: they now ordained that they should be levied for three years, or during the continuance of the war. The army was to consist of eighty-eight battalions, to be furnished and maintained by the respective colonies in a certain proportion, according to the ascertained ability of each. Liberal offers were made of bounties and of pay, as an inducement to men to enlist; and an allotment of lands at the end of the war was promised to all who survived, or to the families of those who fell. They also published an appeal to the American people, to remind them of their assurances of protection and support; they recapitulated the various grievances which they had so often stated, and the rejection of all their applications for redress: nothing but unconditional submission would satisfy their enemies; the only alternatives were resistance or slavery—which of the two were free-born men to choose? The success of the British arms, they alleged, had been greatly exaggerated, and cost very dear. They assured them of the assistance of foreign powers, and exhorted them to firm reliance and resistance; to prepare for a vigorous defence of their liberties, properties, and every object which could be dear to man. The appeal had the desired effect, it revived the spirits of the people, and stimulated the most astonishing efforts to procure re-enforcements for the army.

With the zeal of the Americans, the wisdom and ability of their general most powerfully co-operated, not without being seconded by some unfortunate circumstances in the army of Britain. To the surprise of both friends and enemies, general Howe did not attempt to prosecute the success of his detachment, but retired into winter quarters. He so cantoned his troops that they could not easily be condensed, should a sudden occasion require them to act in concert; bodies of Hessians were quartered at Trenton and Bordentown, near the Delaware, and from knowing the reduced situation of the enemy, had given way to great laxity of discipline. Without being restrained by their officers, or by the commander-in-chief, they ravaged, plundered, and in short exercised every cruelty which could be expected from mercenary hirelings, who fought without sentiment or principle, merely as the instruments of a petty tyrant whose ways and means were the blood of his subjects. They revelled in the proceeds of rapine, and gave way to excesses so natural to men, who by indigence are usually debarred from the comforts of life, when they happen to obtain temporary abundance. New-Jersey became a scene of robbery, disorder, and licentiousness. The Americans, while they dreaded the force, and abhorred the cruelties of Hessians, contemned their slavish submission to the most sordid despotism. Washington, perfectly informed of the Hessian laxity, projected to surprise their detachments at Trenton, and knowing the detestation and resentment with which his countrymen regarded men whom they considered as hirelings, purchased to butcher those who had done them no injury, encouraged them with the hopes of punishing those hated enemies before they should be aware of their danger. In order to prevent the division at Bordentown from af-

[Surprise of the Hessians at Trenton. Inactivity of lord Howe.]

foring any assistance to their countrymen at Trenton, he despatched a body of four hundred and fifty militia, very lightly accoutred and armed, to Mount Holly, in sight of the Hessian post, with orders not to fight, but to fly as soon as they had provoked their enemies to advance, and draw them to as great a distance as possible. The stratagem was successful: colonel Donop, who commanded that cantonment of Hessians, with the whole of his party, except eighty men left at the quarters, had proceeded twelve miles from his own station, and eighteen from Trenton. General Washington discerned that his absence was the fit moment for enterprise, and embraced the opportunity. He passed the Delaware, already almost frozen over, by forcing the boats through the ice, during the night after Christmas; and by day-break on the 26th, surrounded the Hessian cantonment. The Germans were thrown into the greatest astonishment and confusion, and before they could be called to arms, Washington galled them with a heavy fire. Rhalle, the Hessian commander, assembled a considerable number of his troops, and was beginning to charge the enemy with great courage, when he received a mortal wound, on which his soldiers refused to continue the battle, and surrendered themselves prisoners of war. The number of killed and wounded was considerable, but the prisoners amounted to nearly a thousand. This success proved very advantageous to the American cause, as it revived the spirits of the soldiers, and co-operated with the address of the congress, to encourage and stimulate the people. The Americans had particularly dreaded the Hessians, on account of their known warlike discipline; but from seeing so many of them taken prisoners, their fears greatly decreased. The general and congress, with great judgment, paraded the prisoners through the streets of Philadelphia and other populous places, and thus promoted in the people a disposition to enlist. Notwithstanding this advantage, general Washington did not choose to encamp on the east side of the Delaware; he had not the smallest doubt that with such a superior force as he possessed, general Howe would re-occupy the posts in Jersey, and even cross the Delaware. Instead, however, of attempting to regain the position which was thus lost, the general directed colonel Donop to abandon his situation, and retire to Princeton. Washington, encouraged by movements so very different from what he apprehended, again crossed the river, and marched to Trenton at the head of four thousand men. It was now believed that general Howe would have taken the field immediately, but these expectations proved unfounded. Instead of marching with the main army, he sent lord Cornwallis to take command of the detachment in Jersey, while he himself remained quiet at New-York. Lord Cornwallis no sooner arrived, than he marched to attack the enemy at Trenton. General Washington's object was to fatigue, harass, and distress the king's troops, without hazarding a battle. On the approach of the British detachment, therefore, he retired from the town, posted himself on some high grounds in the neighbourhood, and there seemed resolved to await the assault of the enemy. Lord Cornwallis determined to force the post of the enemy; but the next morning, Washington, leaving his fires burning, and piquets advanced, retreated in profound silence; and taking a circuitous route, marched with a design to surprise a British detachment at Princeton, consisting of the seventeenth, fortieth, and fifty-fifth regiments, under lieutenant-colonel Mawhood. This corps was preparing to follow lord Cornwallis, when Washington made his ap-

[Battle at Princeton. Operations on the lakes.]

pearance about sunrise. Mawhood immediately concluded that the American general was retreating from lord Cornwallis, and that by obstructing his march he might afford the British troops from Trenton time to arrive. A foggy morning, and thick woods, prevented him from discovering the number of the enemy: under these mistakes he resolved to hazard an action; the fortieth regiment, which had not been included in the orders to march, was behind at Princeton; and to that corps he sent immediate orders to join his party. Meanwhile the battle began, and a heavy discharge of British artillery did considerable execution; the seventeenth regiment rushed forwards with fixed bayonets, and a dreadful slaughter ensued. The fifty-fifth and fortieth were not sufficiently advanced to support their fellow-soldiers. Several, by their ardour, were severed from the rest of the detachment; the seventeenth, notwithstanding the great superiority of numbers, cut their way through the enemy, and retreated to Brunswick with a loss of near one half of their number. The exploit of the seventeenth, just recorded, was considered as one of the most gallant achievements during the war. The field officers being all absent, captain Scott, who led the regiment, received just and very high applause for his conduct; the loss of the Americans, from the valour of that corps, was very considerable. Lord Cornwallis, discovering the retreat of the enemy, hastened to pursue them; but Washington, though he kept so near the British troops as to give them full employment, did not hazard an engagement. The troops of Cornwallis being broken with the toilsome warfare, he was obliged to retire to Brunswick to refresh his corps, and wait for the arrival of assistance from the commander-in-chief. Washington, meanwhile, overran Jersey, seized the principal towns, and secured the posts on the Delaware, by which means he commanded an easy passage for himself whenever it should be expedient to recross that river.

The conduct and event of these winter operations proved very different from what the friends of Britain expected, and the provincials apprehended. It was conceived, that the general would have acted at the head of his whole combined army, instead of remaining unemployed himself, and parcelling his troops out in a great number of detachments. If, instead of preserving his force concentrated, and pressing forward on the enemy with its whole impulse, they must be spread into such a number of cantonments, it was thought the posts next to the enemy ought to have been the strongest, whereas they were the weakest. The Americans, with reason, dreaded that they would be overwhelmed by the British army; directed by the conduct, and encouraged by the example of its commander in chief to activity and enterprise, but they found they had only to contend with partial detachments, while the main force and the general himself were stationary and inactive. The army of Washington did not amount to seven thousand militia, the army of general Howe to twenty-eight thousand disciplined troops: during six months, from the middle of this winter to the middle of the following summer, Washington remained upon the Delaware, within thirty miles of the British headquarters, without any attempts to dislodge him from his posts, or to proceed to the great object of the war.

The plan of the campaign under general Carleton was, as we have seen, to drive the enemy from Canada, and afterwards proceed by the lakes to the northwestern parts of the province of New-York, that he

Vol. VII.—52

[Destruction of the fleet under Arnold. Crown Point evacuated by the Americans.]

might co-operate with the main army, and have it in his power to invade either the northern or middle colonies as occasion might require; that thus they could separate the southern from the northern provinces, enclose New-York between the two armies, and thereby compel those provincials to surrender at discretion. We left the British generals at the capture of Fort St. John's in the end of June; there an armament was prepared for crossing lake Champlain, in order to besiege Crown Point and Ticonderoga. The Americans had a considerable fleet on lake Champlain, whereas the British had not a single vessel. It was necessary, in order to gain a superiority, to prepare thirty fishing sloops, and to equip them with cannon. The general used every effort to procure the requisite naval force: the largest of the vessels were brought from England, and were afterwards obliged to be taken in pieces and re-constructed, in order to answer their purpose upon the lake. It was necessary also to transport over land, and drag up the rapid current of St. Therese and St. John's, with thirty long boats, a great number of flat boats of great burthen, a gondola weighing thirty tons, and about four hundred batteaux. Notwithstanding the difficulty of the undertaking, and the complexity of the labour and impediments, such was the ardour and activity of the British troops that it was finished in three months. By this time, however, the season was far advanced; not only lake Champlain and lake George were to be encountered, and an unknown force on each subdued, and Crown Point and Ticonderoga captured; but, after these difficulties were overcome, a wild and desolate country covered with intricate forests, indented with swamps and morasses, was to be pervaded, in order to arrive at Albany, and open a communication with general Howe. October was begun before the fleet was ready to oppose the Americans on lake Champlain: the naval force consisted of the *Inflexible*, which was re-constructed at St. John's in twenty-eight days, and mounted eighteen twelve-pounders; one schooner mounting fourteen, and another twelve six-pounders; a flat bottomed batteau, carrying six twenty-four, and the same number of twelve-pounders, besides howitzers; and a gondola, with seven nine-pounders: twenty gun boats, carrying either field-pieces, or howitzers, were furnished in the same manner. There was besides a great number of large boats for transporting the troops, provisions, stores, and other necessaries.* The American force was by no means equal to the British: they had made the most skilful use of their materials, but they wanted timber and artillery: their fleet amounted to fifteen vessels, commanded by Arnold. On the 11th of October, the British fleet, conducted by captain Pringle, and under the general direction of Carleton, discovered the armament of the enemy posted to defend the passage between the island of Valicour and the western main. An engagement commenced, and continued on both sides for several hours with great intrepidity; the unfavourableness of the wind prevented the chief ships of the British from taking a share in the fight. Night approaching, it was thought prudent to discontinue the action; they were accordingly withdrawn, but not before the strongest of the enemy's ships was run aground, and one of their gondolas sunk. Arnold, sensible of the insufficiency of his strength, retreated during the night: the British fleet pursued them the next day, and the

* See Gazette.

[General result of the campaign. Depredations of American privateers.]

day following; and the wind being favourable for bringing all the ships into action, overtook them a few leagues from Crown Point. The American commander, unable to avoid an engagement, made the best disposition which his force permitted: about noon the battle began, and continued with great fury for two hours; but at length the superior force and skill of the British prevailed. The provincials burnt several of the ships, to prevent them falling into the hands of the English. On the 15th of October the British fleet anchored off Crown Point, and the enemy retired to Ticonderoga. General Carleton remained at Crown Point till the third of November: and as the winter was commencing, he did not think it advisable to besiege Ticonderoga. Some of his officers wished the attempt to have been made immediately on his arrival at Crown Point. The distance was only fifteen miles, and the garrison, they conceived, would not hold out ten days against the British force. General Carleton, however, thought the capture of that place might be attended with considerable loss, while the benefit arising from it would be immaterial during the current campaign, because so late in the season they could not think of entering upon lake George, and proceeding to Albany. From the difficulty of subsistence, a garrison could not easily be maintained during the winter: and thus, though taken, it would be necessary to evacuate it again, and leave it to the enemy. Though these arguments did not convince the other officers, yet they determined general Carleton to re-embark the army, and return to St. John's; whence he distributed his army into winter quarters.

Thus of the three great objects of the campaign of 1776, the southern expedition totally failed, and the other two were but partially obtained. The Canadian armament achieved only the reduction of Crown Point: general Howe acquired possession of Long Island, and New-York, with part of the Jerseys. His operations had very little impaired the resources of the enemy; on the other hand, by allowing them to gain unexpected advantages, he had animated hope, inspirited courage, promoted firmness and unanimity, and afforded them a fair prospect of ultimate success.

During this year the American privateers were extremely active and successful. The West India islands, as had been predicted, were in great distress by the interclusion of commerce with America. The most essential necessities of life, especially Indian corn, the principal food of the negroes and of the poor and laborious whites, had risen from three to four times the customary price. Slaves, next in importance and necessity, were not to be procured in sufficient quantity for any sum; and other wants and distresses multiplied. In this period of calamity, a conspiracy was formed for an insurrection of negroes in Jamaica, most of the soldiers having been drafted to America. One hundred and twenty sail of merchantmen were about to depart for Europe, and the conspirators had fixed on their departure as the proper time for carrying the plot into execution, as the island would then be still more defenceless. The conspiracy was brought to light a few days before the fleet actually sailed, and the ships were retained until it was effectually crushed, and order restored. This detention was afterwards attended with very ruinous effects. The American privateers had, during the former part of the summer, been very active and successful: and as the increase of captures enlarged the capitals of the adventurers for more distant en-

[Provincial privateers encouraged by the French.]

terprises, they extended the scene of their depredations. A considerable part of this rich fleet fell into the hands of the provincials; and encouraged by such an acquisition, they afterwards sent cruisers to the West Indies, which captured many other ships. The planters and merchants were almost ruined by the complicated evils that resulted to them from the war. The merchants who had traded to America, continued to be great sufferers, not only by the loss of trade, but by the detention of their property, which was no longer remitted. Towards the end of the year, American ships infested the coasts of Europe, and seizing the British traders, distressed other merchants. The provincial privateers found refuge, protection, and encouragement from France, notwithstanding the professions of amity.

CHAP. XVIII.

British nation still favourable to coercive measures—various causes of this disposition.—Conspiracy and trial of John the Painter.—Meeting of parliament.—King's speech.—debate.—Motion for a revision of acts obnoxious to the Americans, in conformity to general Howe's proclamation—rejected—secession of members.—Letters of marque, &c.—Reprisal bill.—Bill for seizing suspected persons; in which lord North, wishing to please both parties, satisfies neither.—Important amendments, through Mr. Dunning, passed.—Affairs of India—nabob of Arcot, council of Madras, and rajah of Tanjore.—Lord Pigot sent out—conspiracy against him, executed by colonel Stuart—proceedings thereon in the India house—in parliament—seceding members return—lord Chatham's motion for terminating the war—rejected—difference of opinion among opposition concerning American independence.—Unexpected demand from Hesse-Cassel.—Prorogation of parliament.

DESTRUCTIVE as the manifold losses which we have been relating were to the mercantile interest, yet the nation in general continued favourable to the war. The declaration of independence separated from the cause of the Americans persons who had before regarded them as oppressed and suffering fellow-subjects: these now contended that the question no longer was, "Have our brethren been well or ill treated? but shall we not reduce our declared enemies? As long as they acknowledged themselves subjects of the British constitution, we wished them to enjoy all the rights and privileges which our excellent polity confers and secures; but now they have renounced connexion, and declared hostility to this country, we, as Britons, must oppose the enemies of Britain." By this species of reasoning, extended farther than the subject of the analogy justified, they inferred, that the parental authority extended to the control of the property eventually acquired by the children through their own ability, industry, and skill. The asserted ingratitude they enhanced, by alleging that the preceding war was commenced and carried on for the sake of these colonies, and that they were debtors to us for all those efforts by which we had vanquished the enemy, and secured our American settlements. No arguments were more frequently repeated by the censurers of American resistance, than this charge of ingratitude; the weight of which so obviously depends, not on the benefit conferred, but on the motives for rendering the service. The hostilities that commenced in 1755, arose on one side from a determination to prevent France from being aggrandized at our expense, and to repress encroachments upon colonies which were so beneficial in Britain. The consideration of filial duty led to parental dignity as well as claims; zeal for the maintenance of British authority and supremacy induced many a loyal and patriotic subject to reprobate the Americans; and not doubting that our demands were founded in right, and conducive to honour, they did not examine whether this assertion of our alleged rights would not be over balanced by the expense and danger of the contest; and in spite of the experience which they had already received in the course of two very costly years, still regarded the reduction of the colonies as a

[Friends of constitutional liberty.]

profitable object. The ministerial system they conceived would greatly diminish our national burthens; on a balance of accounts, we should find ourselves gainers by the war; besides those who from public motives approve of the contest, there were not wanting men who supported it from private interest; the certainty, or believed probability, of acquiring lucrative contracts, or rather profits from the war, which they could not expect in peace. The multitude were, as usual, directed by authority; the greater number of peers, and of the principal gentry, were staunch supporters of the ministry; and in addition to their immediate dependents connected with them by the ties of interest, there were many more who, either from attachment, admiration of rank and fortune, or vanity, were influenced by their opinions, followed their example, praised the measures and conduct of ministry, and reviled the Americans and the British opponents of administration. Great numbers felt resentment and indignation at the ingratitude and insolence which they imputed to the colonists, for resisting such reasonable demands of their benefactors, under whose fostering care they had been reared to their present strength: they formed analogies from the returns incumbent on filial duty for parental affection, and support bestowed in the days of inability to provide for themselves. From these various causes, and probably others, a large majority of the people of all ranks at this time approved of the American war throughout the nation. Those who still continued to censure the compulsory system that had been adopted towards the colonists, if far less numerous, were by no means deficient in respectability; among these, besides the partisans of parliamentary opposition, were some of the chief gentlemen and a great number of the smaller landholders in English counties; a considerable portion of independent merchants, who neither possessed nor expected contracts from government, and found commerce injured by the war; manufacturers in similar circumstances; protestant dissenters, the ardent friends of civil and religious liberty, who carried their zeal perhaps farther than was consistent with order; the ablest of English counsellors who held no office under government, but who, relying on personal efforts, and having no motives to be expectants of donatives, free and independent by their talents, were the friends of constitutional liberty. Literary men did not then constitute so numerous a class as they have since become; lord North, a scholar and a man of taste, was a friend to literature, and some of the ablest writers and many of subordinate rank, were patronized by the court; though individuals of superior celebrity were adverse to the measures of government, yet authors, as a body, could not be said to be hostile to a ministry which held genius and learning in high estimation. The clergy of England were in general friendly to administration: of the Scottish church, except a few, by office, sinecure, or pension, connected with government, the men of most ability and influence were inimical to the stamp act, and all the subsequent proceedings of the compulsory system; and though they did not justify the wisdom of the American declaration of independence, yet imputed it to the united rashness, violence, and weakness of the British cabinet. From continued contrariety of sentiment, a general virulence prevailed between the supporters and censurers of the ministerial system; and to the charge of erroneous reasoning, the parties, very often reciprocally added the accusation of corrupt and even flagitious motives, by which there is no evidence, and little

[Conspiracy and trial of John the Painter.]

probability, that the greater number of either side were actuated. An incident which happened about this time caused very great alarm through the kingdom, produced very contrary constructions from the opposite parties, and from both, as far as we have any evidence, interpretations very different from the truth.

Near the close of this year, the rope-house at Portsmouth was set on fire, and the perpetrator, when discovered, exhibited a singular instance of human depravity: this was James Aitken, destined to immortal infamy under the name of John the Painter. According to his own confession, this man, though only four-and-twenty years of age, had committed a surprising number and variety of atrocious acts, with a secrecy which long escaped detection, with a perseverance which manifested a firmness and constancy of enormity rarely to be found in the annals of crimes, and with a machination that displayed a very considerable portion of ingenuity. Totally unsocial in his villainy, he by solitary guilt precluded an usual source of impeachment in the confession of accomplices, and at last incurred by circumstantial evidence the long merited punishment which from his isolated wickedness no direct testimony could sanction. Aitken was born in Edinburgh, and bred a painter; of a melancholy temper, a gloomy disposition, and ardent passions, he had a strong propensity to vice, and sought his own sole gratification. Having no pleasure in the converse of other men, he found no charms in convivial profligacy and associated turpitude. Very early in life he had been seized with a desire of wandering, and exploring in other countries the means and opportunities of wickedness. About three years before this time he had betaken himself to America, where he had imbibed a mortal antipathy to his country, and formed the extravagant design of subverting the government, and destroying the nation which he so much abhorred. He projected to annihilate the maritime force of England, as well as her internal riches and strength, by burning the royal dockyards, the principal trading cities and towns, with their respective shipping. He traversed the kingdom to discover the state and accessibility of the several docks, and found them in general not rigidly guarded: he took great pains to construct fire-works, machines, and combustibles: he attempted the great hemp-house at Portsmouth, but failed: he succeeded in setting fire to the rope-house, and having immediately set off for London, from Portsdown-hill feasted his diabolical malignity with contemplating the dreadful conflagration, which, from its prodigious appearance, he imagined to have extended to all the docks, magazines, and buildings. He made similar attempts at Blymouth and at Bristol, but fortunately without success. In pervading the country to execute his designs, he committed robberies, burglaries, and rapes. At last, some intimation of his conduct, with a description of his person, reached the chief police magistrate, sir John Fielding, and he was apprehended for burglary. No evidence appearing to establish the charge, he was on the point of being dismissed, when some circumstances excited a suspicion against him as an incendiary: being examined by the privy-council and the lords of the admiralty, he behaved with great caution and presence of mind, and baffled all their attempts to discover the truth. At last another painter sent to him in confinement, insinuated himself into his confidence, and procured an acknowledgment of designs and acts which proved eventually a clue to the whole labyrinth of his

[Meeting of parliament. Speech of the king.]

guilt. He was tried at Portsmouth, and the chain of circumstances being so strong as to prevent the possibility of doubt, though he himself displayed great ingenuity, acuteness, and dexterity, in rebutting obvious inferences, the jury, without leaving the court, adjudged him guilty. Finding death inevitable, he made a full confession of his manifold iniquities, and acknowledged the justness of his condemnation. In detailing his own acts, he asserted that going to Paris, he had informed Mr. Silas Dean, an agent from America, of his project to burn the English docks, and had been promised a great reward if he should execute his attempts.

The facts and circumstances brought to light by or through this miscreant, gave full scope to the rage and virulence of both parties. Supporters of the ministerial system attributed the acts of Aitken to the instigation of American and republican partisans within the kingdom; their opponents, no less bigoted, considered the alleged discoveries as the inventions or exaggerations of Tories, in order to bring Whigs and liberty into discredit. There was not the smallest shadow of probability that either party was concerned with John the Painter, or was any farther to blame than for credulity and illiberal comments. Various hypotheses, however, respecting this despicable person, constituted the principal subject of discussion, declamation, and invective, to the inferior adherents both of ministers and opposition for several months; so readily do the zealous votaries of party believe improbable stories, and adopt absurd opinions, when agreeable to their favourite notions.

On the 31st of October parliament assembled. His majesty's speech informed them, that so daring and desperate was now the spirit of American leaders, whose object had always been dominion and power, that they had openly renounced all allegiance to the crown, and all political connexion with the country, rejected with indignity and insult our offers of conciliation, and had presumed to set up their rebellious confederacies as independent communities. Were American treason suffered to take root, it would prove pernicious to the loyal colonies, to the commerce and political interests of the kingdom, and to the present system of all Europe. One advantage to be expected from the open avowal of this object, would be at home the general prevalence of unanimity, and a conviction that the measures pursued by government were necessary. The events of the campaign afforded the strongest hopes of ultimate success; but the delays unavoidable in commencing operations, prevented the progress from being complete. Other courts continued to assure the king of their amicable dispositions; nevertheless, in the present situation of affairs, it was expedient to put the kingdom in a respectable state of defence. He regretted the expense necessarily attendant upon our present situation, but doubted not that the commons would cheerfully grant the supplies that might be wanted for such momentous purposes. His sole object was to promote the true interest of all his subjects; no people ever lived under a milder government or enjoyed more happiness, than the revolted colonies, as was demonstrated by their population, arts, wealth, and the strength by sea and land, which now gave them confidence to contend with the mother country. Addresses being framed according to the usual form of complimentary repetition, produced very vehement debates, and motions of amendment diametrically opposite to the original propositions. The opponents of ministers asserted, that

[Debates on the addresses. Reasoning of opposition.]

the disaffection and revolt of a whole people could not have taken place without error or misconduct in their former rulers ; they repeated their objections to the present system of measures, imputed to them pernicious effects, and contended that nothing could restore Britain and America to their former happy state and relations, but a total change both of counsels and counsellors. Nothing could be more inconsistent with a proper spirit in parliament, than an attempt to bend British subjects to an abject unconditional submission to any power whatever ; to annihilate their liberties, and subdue them to servile principles and passive habits by means of foreign mercenaries. Amidst the excesses (it was said) which have happened, we ought to respect the spirit and principles which so evidently bear an exact analogy to those that supported the most valuable part of our own constitution. The speech had asserted, that the prosperous state of America was owing to the mild government and fostering protection of Britain : they admitted the proposition, but a necessary consequence of the truth was, that those who had wantonly changed so beneficial a system deserved the severest censure. The Americans had been charged with implicitly obeying arbitrary leaders ; who were these tyrants ? In no country of great population and power was there so near an equality between individuals, or so little of dependence ; in situations, wherein labour was extremely productive even to the lowest operator, a very moderate share of industry produced an ample subsistence, and removed the cause which in other countries so often rendered the lower classes retainers to some patron in the higher. As the general prevalence of independent and easy subsistence precluded the necessity of abject submission to wealth, the want of nobility prevented the authority annexed in other countries to rank and title. The provincials had no motives to yield to the authority of adventitious distinctions ; Mr. Hancock, their civil president, was a plain merchant, of fair character, who possessed no influence over the people beyond that which arose from the trouble caused by British administration. Mr. Washington was a country gentleman of a great landed estate, such as several private gentlemen possess in every county in England ; respectable in his own district, but little known beyond its limits before the situation of his country called him from obscurity. Others, now most eminent in the field and congress, would have been still more obscure, had not the oppressive acts of Britain stimulated the public exertion of their abilities : in circumstances rendering resistance necessary to preserve their liberties, they naturally reposed their chief confidence in virtue and ability : they acknowledged the power of talents and qualifications ; listened to the advice which they thought wisest and most patriotic, from their own delegates and agents ; and followed their counsels with a willing ratification, and not an extorted obedience. The persons represented by ministers as governing the Americans with despotical tyranny, were no other than their own officers and servants, appointed by their will, and removeable at their pleasure. The conciliatory offers, in themselves totally inadequate to the case, had not been brought forward until the whole system declaring them rebels and enemies, and denouncing the vengeance due to such, had full time and scope for operation. The amicable and pacific professions of other powers deserved no reliance, while they were really assisting the Americans, and making powerful preparations both by sea and land. Respecting the required unanimity, mi-

[Arguments of ministers. Peculiar situation of opposition.]

ministers could not be serious. "We (continued their opponents) predicted the mischiefs which have since actually arisen, because we reprobated ministerial proceedings as pernicious; and though they have really proved more fatal than we represented, yet we are called upon to give our approbation and support."

Ministers contended, that "the American declaration of independence had entirely destroyed the grounds on which they had been formerly supported in parliament. Our colonies enabled us to hold a principal place among the chief powers of Europe; deprived of these settlements, we should be reduced to a state of humiliation and dependence. Should we ingloriously relinquish our present situation, or by a vigorous exertion retain our usual power and splendour? Besides interest and safety, indignation and resentment ought to rouse the British spirit to chastise the ingratitude and insolence of the American rebels. Though the atrociousness of their crimes would justify any severity of punishment, it was still wished to treat them with lenity, when brought to a knowledge of their condition, and a sense of their duty. Designing and ambitious leaders never could have succeeded in instigating the Americans to hostility and a declaration of independence, if their disobedient and rebellious spirit had not been fomented and nourished by aspiring and factious men in this country, who sacrificed loyalty and patriotism to their own selfish and unjustifiable projects. The opponents of ministers in parliament having hitherto avowedly regulated their conduct on the supposition that the Americans never designed or even desired independence, were now bound to support, with the utmost vigour, measures necessary for their reduction." The votes in favour of ministry were nearly as numerous as usual, but in debate the animation of their friends was not so ardent; the hopes of an immediate reduction of America they saw were not fulfilled; another campaign must be encountered, very great expense must be incurred, and foreign powers would probably interfere in the protracted contest.

The declaration of American independence placed the supporters of the colonists in a situation never before known in the history of parliament; the Americans were no longer fellow-subjects complaining of grievances, but a separate state engaged in hostilities with this country. Parliamentary annals do not before this session afford an instance of a party in our senate avowedly defending the cause of a power with which our country was at war, with the approbation of both the senate and nation. Members may have censured either the impolicy or precipitancy of intended hostilities,* but after they were actually commenced, have abstained from such opposition, as tending to inspirit the enemy, and to dishearten their countrymen. They have objected to specific plans for carrying on the war, and censured instances of rash or feeble execution; but their animadversions were confined to management without extending to origin: they showed themselves aware that when a powerful state is once involved in a war, the only effectual means of honourable and secure extrication are vigorous efforts; but the opponents of ministers at this period took a different course, and however prudent and just their exertions might be while they tended to avert war, they became much more ques-

* In the Dutch war undertaken by the mean and profligate Charles, not merely a party, but the parliament and nation were averse to hostilities.

[Motion for a revision of the obnoxious acts. Secession of members.]

tionable in point of expediency, from the time that the colonies separated themselves from the mother country.

A few days after the introductory debate, lord John Cavendish having produced a copy of the proclamation issued by lord Howe and his brother on the capture of New-York, proposed that in conformity to its promises, the house should resolve itself into a committee for revising the acts by which the Americans thought themselves aggrieved. Ministers replied, that the proffered redress of grievances was intended only for those who should return to their duty. A disavowal of independence and an acknowledgment of British supremacy were requisite, on the part of the colonies, before any conciliatory measures could be adopted by Britain. The proclamation was perfectly conformable to the general spirit of all our proceedings; sanctioned by great majorities in parliament, it assured protection and the maintenance of their constitutional rights to those who should return to their duty, but vindicated the authority and dignity of this country. To revise and repeal laws with a view to redress the grievances of a people, who, denying the authority of such laws, could not be aggrieved by their existence, would be grossly absurd and nugatory. If they persisted in their renunciation of dependence, there was no doubt from our force and our recent successes, that we could soon reduce them to submission. Although the ministerial argument, that it was absurd to debate upon the degree of authority to be exercised over men who denied the asserted right of exercising any, was fair; yet their assertion, that this proclamation offered no more than preceding acts of the legislature and executive government, was not equally just; before, they had promised amnesty to unconditional submission; in this paper they had proposed a condition, in compliance with which a revision of obnoxious laws and a redress of grievances were proffered. In the course of the debate, ministers, though they agreed in opposing the motion, took different grounds. Lord North dwelt chiefly on conciliation, which he appeared to think the commissioners might effectuate: lord George Germaine, and other speakers, trusted chiefly to compulsion, as the only means of driving out of them their spirit of independence. Opposition did not fail to observe and mention their diversity, which, indeed, had very frequently been discovered; but that body itself, without harmony and system, notwithstanding the great abilities of several members, and the extraordinary powers of some, did not so effectually counteract the schemes of ministers, as it might have done by unanimity and concert. In debating this question, the speeches of opposition rather indicated than showed the difference of opinion concerning American independence, which afterwards became manifest, and even produced a political schism among the opponents of the North administration. Mr. Burke and the Rockingham party early intimated a wish to treat with America without questioning her independence: Mr. Fox had joined opposition through no party connexion, but chiefly associated with Mr. Burke and his political friends, and adopted many of their principles and doctrines; he agreed to this opinion, avowed it with his usual openness, and supported it with his usual force. Mr. Dunning, colonel Barré, lords Camden, Shelburne, and Temple, and others connected with the earl of Chatham, wished to treat with America, but to maintain the supremacy of Britain.

After the rejection of this motion, many of the minority, especially of

[Letters of marque and reprisal bills. Bill for seizing suspicious persons.]

the Rockingham party, withdrew from the house when any question respecting America was discussed; they attended on ordinary business, but when that was despatched, retired. They said, they were wearied with opposing reason and argument to power and numbers without any effect. This secession was by no means approved by opposition in general, many even loudly blamed such proceedings. A member of parliament, they asserted, consistent with his duty, cannot withdraw himself from the business of parliament, merely from an opinion that he will be outvoted, and ought not thence to infer that his attendance must be useless; though by vigilance they did not procure a majority, they were not without effect, as by discovering and exposing the absurdity and mischievous tendency of measures, they could often modify, if they did not prevent, pernicious laws and counsels. Some acknowledged, that the whole body of the minority might secede jointly, but that members ought not to absent themselves separately; and in support of this opinion they rather quoted precedents than adduced arguments. In 1738, Mr. Pitt, and the whole opposition to sir Robert Walpole, had on the ratification of the Spanish convention, absented themselves from parliament. The defenders of individual secession contended, that, in cases of imminent danger to the constitution, such conduct might operate as a call to the nation, and awaken the people to a real sense of their condition: its assailants insisted, that whoever was fit for being a useful member of parliament, must derive his utility not from inaction but from effort: that by his presence he might lessen the evil of hurtful propositions, though he could not amend them by his absence. They appealed to experience to prove the beneficial amendments which ministerial motions often underwent from the strictures of opposition, so as to be rendered more innocent before they passed into laws.

After the proposed revision of obnoxious acts, no political question of material magnitude engaged the attention of parliament until the expiration of the Christmas recess. In the beginning of February, a bill was introduced by lord North, for granting letters of marque and reprisals against American ships, which passed the house of commons without opposition; in the house of lords it underwent the small alteration of inserting the word *permission* instead of *marque*, the latter being supposed applicable only to foreign enemies.

Another bill proposed soon after by the minister, excited severe animadversion in parliament, and great alarm among the people; this was a law to enable his majesty to secure and detain persons *suspected* of treason, committed either in America or on the high seas, or *accused* of piracy. By the bill, persons so charged or suspected were liable to be imprisoned in a common gaol or any other place of confinement within his majesty's dominions, there to remain without either bail, or the privilege of demanding a trial to ascertain the charges. The law was to comprehend crimes supposed to be generated in these realms, though committed abroad, and the penalties were to extend to all at home, by whom they should be suspected to be suggested or encouraged. The law was to continue in force for a year; and thus any man asserted to be suspected of these crimes, might at the pleasure of ministers, be detained in prison at home, or even sent to our foreign settlements; deprived of his liberty, or doomed to banishment without any investigation of his case. Every British subject might be alleged to be an object of

[Opposition to the bill—it is passed with amendments.]

suspicion ; his liberty, therefore, the enjoyment of his friends and native country, the exercise of his talents, industry, and skill, might depend upon the permission of administration. Mr. Dunning first discovered and exposed the nature and tendency of this proposition ; it might, he proved, operate not only as a suspension of the *habeas corpus*, but as a temporary banishment to persons against whom there was no evidence of criminal conduct. It was contrary to the spirit of laws and a free constitution, founded in arbitrary principles, and fitted to produce tyrannical consequences ; these positions he established by a recital of its various provisions, and an enumeration of its obvious effects. The strongest objections being already adduced, Mr. Fox followed the probable operation of the law through a great variety of cases, and by his luminous eloquence illustrated its injustice and impolicy. Recurring to its principle, he inferred it to be an index of a general design long formed for changing the constitution of this country, and executed as opportunities served, circumstances suited, and power increased. To support their motion, ministers employed the usual topics ; in dangerous situations it is necessary to strengthen the hands of government, and impossible to carry on public business without delegating power to the crown, which would be improper in seasons of tranquillity. The apprehensions from the operation implied a want of that confidence in ministers, without which they could not perform their official duties ; should the authority intrusted to the executive government for a specific and indispensable purpose be abused, the means of redress were easy ; parliament could not only withhold future reliance, but prosecute past malversation. To these common arguments, the luminaries of the law and eloquence urged their objections with a force which lord North saw it was in vain to combat ; he was moreover informed that great fears were entertained by the people from the proposed law : to satisfy all parties, his characteristic dexterity gave such an explanation of his purposes, as permitted a very material change in the bill. Perceiving the minister begin to relax, Mr. Dunning offered two amendments ; the one circumscribing the objects, the other the penalties of the law. After a long discussion, it was agreed that the bill should extend to none who were not out of the kingdom when the offences were committed, and that the confinement should be in no part of his majesty's dominions but within this realm. Lord North, in admitting these changes, declared that the present state of the bill corresponded with his principles and objects ; and that he was sorry if any ambiguity of expression excited a different opinion : he hoped the present correction would satisfy gentlemen in opposition, and that the law would meet universal approbation. While the minister thus strove to please both parties, he, as is usually the case, satisfied neither ; opposition thought he conceded too little, many of the ministerial party that he conceded too much ; and that to render the bill agreeable to his political adversaries, he deviated from the intent with which it was designed by his coadjutors. Lord North, indeed, often rendered it evident, that on very important questions he either did not originally agree with some of his own colleagues, or that, in the progress of a discussion, he fluctuated between contrary opinions. His education had rendered him a tory ; his situation and many concurrent circumstances made him the official promoter of coercion, but his temper and disposition inclined him to mildness and conciliation. If any of his measures were imperious

[Nabob of Arcot. Lord Pigot sent to India.]

or arbitrary, their severity and harshness arose, not from a mind dictatorial and tyrannical, but too yielding and indulgent, and which, from excessive pliancy, too often gave way to understandings far inferior to his own. The bill, with the alterations, passed the house of commons; and being carried to the peers, occasioned neither debate nor amendment. The peers of opposition absented themselves so generally, that the only protesting opponent was lord Abingdon.

The attention of the nation for several years had been almost solely engrossed by the American contest; but a transaction on the coast of Coromandel now attracted the regard of the public to the East Indies.

At the treaty of Paris, France had been obliged to admit Sallabat Sing as lawful soubah of the Decan: Mahomed Ali Cawn, as lawful nabob of the Carnatic, or of Arcot. This prince had ever since cultivated a very close intercourse with the civil and military powers of the English presidency at Madras, and resided in the fortress. He displayed vigorous ability, enterprise, and ambition; and formed a considerable army, which he disciplined by British officers. His expensive establishment and munificent gifts to the company's servants, had greatly exhausted his treasures; but his donations and character acquired an influence in the council, through which, with the assistance of his forces, he did not doubt that he would soon supply the deficiencies. Accordingly a joint project was concerted by the nabob and his friends of the British presidency; this was an expedition to Tanjore. Fuligee, rajah of Tanjore, was a Gentoo prince, near Cape Comorin, whose ancestors had never been conquered by the Mahomedan invaders of Hindostan: they were, however, obliged to pay a tribute. He himself had been for many years, and then was, in alliance with both the English and the nabob, and held his dominions under their joint guarantee. When the mogul granted to the English such extensive powers, and they formed such arrangements as would render them most profitable, it was resolved that Mahomed Ali Cawn should be appointed to collect a revenue due to his superior, and that a considerable sum should be allowed to himself for agency. After this nomination, a great variety of pecuniary transactions took place between Mahomed and the king of Tanjore. The nabob applied to Fuligee for the revenue that was due; the rajah alleged that he had a right to deduct sums owing to him by the other, on the balance of their private accounts. The nabob insisted on the immediate payment of the whole revenue, and proposed to refer their own concerns to subsequent consideration. Fuligee repeated his proposals for the deduction, and pleaded his inability by any other means to pay the demand. The nabob applied to the government at Madras, and engaged the presidency to support him, by invading Tanjore with the company's forces. The event of this convention was, that the rajah was despoiled of his riches, and his subjects were plundered.* The proceeds of this incursion amounted to about five millions sterling; and the chief part of the booty was divided among the company's servants. When the news of this expedition reached England, the East India directors manifested great displeasure against the plunderers of Tanjore, and concerted measures for making all possible restitution to the injured rajah. For that purpose, they sent out as governor to Madras, lord Pigot, so highly respected for

* Annual Register, 1777, p. 94—110.

{Conspiracy against him.}

his able and effectual defence of it seventeen years before against the French; to him the company were indebted for preserving its possessions in that part of India. His civil government was no less distinguished than his military exploits, and his private character procured him extensive esteem. The English presidency, meanwhile, prepared to guard against the consequences of their late acts; and the nabob was still more anxiously making provisions for not only retaining what he had already acquired, but for securing, through his friends at Madras, the perpetual possession of the kingdom of Tanjore. Lord Pigot arrived in the latter end of 1775, and was violently opposed by the majority of the council and the commander in chief, in executing the proposed plans of reform. Notwithstanding these obstacles, he succeeded so far as to restore the king of Tanjore to his ancient and hereditary dominions. This act of justice enraged the nabob, who, with his son, an impetuous and daring youth, joined the most avowedly violent of their friends in the presidency. Lord Pigot thought it of the highest moment to send a proper officer to restore the king of Tanjore; but the majority of the council opposed the appointment of the person whom he nominated for that purpose, and contended that their board had a right to act, notwithstanding the dissent of the governor. Pigot contended, that the governor was a part in every legal and orderly act of government. His lordship finding, as he affirmed, that the sole principle of the council was to traverse all his endeavours to carry the orders of the company into execution, embraced a very strong measure: having put the question, he, by his own casting vote, suspended two of the council; and, by his supreme authority put the commander in chief under arrest. Enraged at these proceedings, the secluded members, together with the nabob and his son, formed a plot for securing the person of the president, and effecting a revolution in the government, which should place the power entirely in their own hands. By the confinement of sir Robert Fletcher, colonel Stuart succeeded to the immediate command of the forces. This gentleman was extremely intimate with the governor, to whom he appeared warmly attached; nevertheless he was closely connected with the suspended members and their adherents. Becoming an accomplice in their conspiracy, he, by his military power and personal ability, was a formidable accession to their party. Stuart was aware that violence offered to the governor's person by the troops within the precincts of the fortress, would involve the actors in the capital penalties of the mutiny laws; but by means of his professed friendship, he was able to invent a stratagem for seizing the person of the governor, without incurring the legal criminality. On the 24th of August 1776, colonel Stuart spent the day at the house of lord Pigot,* and was entertained with all the cordiality that a host could exert to a visitant whom he thought his sincere and affectionate friend. The guest, complaining of the excessive heat of the fortress, and observing his entertainer also affected by it, advised him to spend the night at a villa belonging to the governor, and, as an inducement, offered to accompany him in the excursion. The governor being persuaded, they set out together: when they were beyond the precincts of the fort, his lordship, according to the concert of his guest and professed

* Annual Register, 1777, p. 252, 255; and in detail in the evidence before the company.

[Proceedings in the India House and in parliament.]

friend with his avowed enemies, was met by an officer and a party of sepoys, rudely and violently dragged out of the chaise, carried prisoner to the Mount, and strongly guarded. Public orders, signed by the principal conspirators, were issued, by which immediate death was denounced on all who should attempt his rescue. The conspirators and their friends, under a course of legal forms, assumed the whole power of government. Representations of these transactions were immediately transmitted by the different parties to Europe; and the nabob, who had taken so active a share in the disturbances, sent a gentleman as his agent both to the company and ministers. A court of proprietors having considered the business, recommended to the directors to reinstate lord Pigot, and punish those who had dispossessed him of his power. The directors were not so decided in their opinion as their constituents: they voted indeed for the restoration of lord Pigot, and the suspension of the conspirators from their offices; but they also resolved, that his lordship's conduct had been reprehensible in several instances. When they re-considered the business, it was evident that their opinions were much farther distant from those of the proprietors, than at first. The agents of the ruling party at Madras, and the commissioners from the nabob, had by this time pressed their arguments and statements with a force and effect which weakened the professions that had produced the late resolutions. Government also had listened with such attention to the accounts of the prevailing party, as to have become manifestly favourable to the opposers of lord Pigot. On the 9th of May, the question being again discussed in the India house,* it was determined that the governor should be restored, but that he and the council of Madras should be ordered home, and their respective conduct undergo a legal scrutiny. From this determination governor Johnstone appealed to the house of commons, and moved for resolutions expressing strong approbation of the conduct of lord Pigot, condemning the proceedings of his opponents, and annulling the resolution. The seceders were now returned to the house, and, with the rest of the party, supported the motion of governor Johnstone. The adherents of ministry censured the conduct of lord Pigot, as well as his opponents, and contended, that in such circumstances it was right and equitable to bring both parties to England, where only a just and impartial inquiry into their conduct could be carried into execution. By the restoration of lord Pigot, the dignity of government would be supported and established; but he had abused his trust, and violated the constitution of the company, therefore his removal was equally just and necessary. Opposition justified the conduct of the governor, and insisted that the proceedings toward him amounted to an insurrection against established government. Mr. Burke displayed the atrocity of inferior servants towards a superior, who was promoting the honour and interests of their mutual master; and entered very deeply into the conduct of the nabob of Arcot, and the corrupt and dangerous influence acquired not only at Madras but in this country by that ambitious prince. The British government had espoused his cause, and that of his factious adherents: administration, by becoming the tools of this nabob, and countenancing schemes destructive to the interests of the company, had rendered it absolutely necessary for parliament to interfere for the security and preser-

* See proceedings of the India house respecting lord Pigot.

[Motion of lord Chatham for terminating the war rejected. Supplies.]

vation of India. These arguments had considerable weight, and the motion was negatived by a majority of only twenty-three, being much smaller than those which usually voted for ministers. As governor Johnstone's appeal was rejected, the resolutions of the India house met with no further animadversion from parliament: an order was sent out for recalling lord Pigot, as well as the members of the council.

On the 30th of May, the earl of Chatham made one effort to rescue his country from the miseries of war. This illustrious statesman disregarded the disappointment of his former attempts, and was more strongly confirmed by the event in his reprobation of hostilities destructive to the parties: enfeebled by age, borne down by distemper, and supported by crutches, with a body fit only for the bed of sickness, but a mind qualified to restore the nation from sickness to health if it would follow his prescription, the venerable patriot came forward to propose the salvation of the state by a change of counsels and of conduct. He moved an address to the throne, representing that they were deeply penetrated by the misfortunes which impended over the kingdom from the continuation of an unnatural war. He recommended an immediate cessation of hostilities, and a removal of accumulated grievances, as the only means of regaining the affections of our brethren, and securing to Great Britain the commercial and political advantages of those valuable possessions. In explaining his general object, he unavoidably repeated statements formerly made, and arguments frequently advanced, both by himself and other statesmen. But he exhibited more fully and circumstantially than at any preceding period, the danger to which our discord and situation exposed us from the house of Bourbon. This part of his speech was a forcible, eloquent and impressive comment on his own text, delivered at a much earlier stage of the contest—FRANCE AND SPAIN ARE WATCHING THE MATURITY OF YOUR ERRORS. It showed with what penetrating sagacity and enlarged comprehension a mind of which "age had neither dimmed the perspicacity nor narrowed the range,"* darted into the secret counsels of our rivals, developed the proofs of their designs, and unfolded the series of their policy. Ministers, he said, as they had blundered from the beginning, are led into a fatal error respecting our inveterate enemies the French; they imagine nothing is to be dreaded from France, because she has not directly interfered in favour of America. Would they have France incur the expense and hazard of a war, when Britain is doing all for her that she can possibly wish or desire?† She has been sedulous to give just that degree of countenance and protection, which has hitherto served to keep the civil war alive, so as to baffle your designs, or to waste your strength. The energetic orator described in the truest light, as well as the most glowing colours, the evils that had arisen, were proceeding, and must farther issue, from the ministerial system. Nevertheless his reasoning and eloquence were again unavailing, his pacificatory motions were rejected, and wisdom cried, but she was not regarded.

The supplies for the current year were very great: they consisted of about forty-five thousand seamen, and about sixty thousand land forces, including all in the British pay at home and abroad. The sums required for the three great departments of annual provision, the navy, army, and

* See Mackintosh's *Vindicia Gallicæ*.

† See parliamentary reports, 3d May, 1777.

[Strictures on lord North. Unexpected demand from Hesse-Cassel.]

ordinance, were granted without a division. The demands of the year rendering a loan necessary, five millions were voted; the new taxes for paying the interest were, a duty upon male servants not employed in agriculture, manufactures, or commerce; on auctioneers, and on goods sold by auction; and additional imposts on glass and stamps. These being all taxes which could not be charged with affecting the necessities of life, or extending greatly to the poorer classes, were deemed unobjectionable as measures of finance. On inspecting the accounts of expenditure during the preceding year, opposition contended that they were perplexed, obscure, and nearly unintelligible. Besides this intricacy, which they imputed to them generally, there were in various instances great sums stated in the gross amount, without any specification of items. This objection was urged with peculiar severity against the charges for contracts; the agreement for supplying the army and fleet in America with rum, afforded an ample field for animadversion: four shillings per gallon had been allowed, when three was the market price; and the contractor was in one account credited with thirty-five thousand pounds for rum, without any statement of the quantity, quality, or price of the goods delivered: the same person had also the benefit of a very objectionable contrast with government for furnishing horses. In discussing these bargains, lord North's dealings with contractors, which afterwards constituted so capital a subject of reprehension, were for the first time scrutinized and censured; and it was strongly contended, that in the department of his business which respected national grants, the minister was far from being *a frugal steward of the public money*. But the animadversions on this profusion were by no means confined to economical considerations, they also extended to political. Opposition charged the minister not only with waste, but corruption: several contractors had seats in parliament; national treasure, it was observed, was squandered in iniquitous contracts, and the contractor was, by the money of his constituents, bribed to betray their interests, which he had been chosen to protect. Bad and unwholesome provisions were allowed to be sent by persons receiving a price much beyond the market value of provisions that were really good and wholesome: such deleterious fare spread distemper through the troops, and carried off many more than actual service. The minister endeavoured to defend himself from these charges; but his arguments, though plausible and dexterously urged, were by no means cogent and convincing.

The payment of an unexpected demand to the langrave of Hesse-Cassel, for a debt alleged by him to have been due for levy money ever since 1755, was severely censured. The minister contended that the claim was fair, though from the distance of time not expected. The Hessian prince was in justice entitled to the amount, though there had been no late treaty; and while we were now deriving such benefit from his troops, policy required us to keep on the best terms with him, by satisfying his just demands.

After the pecuniary business had been thought to be entirely at an end, and the session was drawing near to a close, a message was delivered from his majesty, informing the house that a debt of 618,000*l.* had been incurred by the civil list. The minister moved, that the requisite sum should be granted for discharging the amount; and that a hundred thousand pounds should be added annually to the eight hundred

[Debt of the civil list. Address of the speaker to the king.]

thousand. This motion was strongly opposed: the incumbrance, it was alleged, was owing entirely to the profusion of ministers, and had been contracted for the sake of carrying on and supporting a system of corruption. The accounts were, as usual with that minister, intentionally intricate, obscure, and general; no less than 294,000*l.* was placed to the account of secret-service money; and vast sums were charged for foreign ambassadors and for the board of works, without any particularization. It was inconsistent with the duty of the commons to their constituents, to vote away the national money, without any evidence of value received; the eight hundred thousand pounds was sufficient for answering the various appropriations, and supporting the regal dignity and splendour. The desired addition was peculiarly unreasonable at the present time, when the nation was groaning under their accumulated burthens to promote the ruinous projects of ministry, and to encourage their extravagance and corruption. Ministers argued, that the present debt, and the necessity of an addition to the income of the civil list, arose from the same cause, the diminished value of money; besides the royal family had increased in number. *The greatest possible economy* (said lord North) *always had been, and always should be employed, while he was at the head of the treasury.* The motions being carried through both houses, the speaker, a few days after, in presenting the bill to the king for assent, used the following words: "In a time sore, of public distress, full of difficulty and danger, their constituents labouring under burthens almost too heavy to be borne, your faithful commons, postponing all other business, have not only granted to your majesty a large present supply, but also a very great additional revenue, great beyond example, great beyond your majesty's highest expense; but all this, sire, they have done in the well grounded confidence, that you will apply wisely what they have granted liberally." On their return to their own house, the commons voted unanimous thanks to the speaker. Some of the ministerial party, however, on reconsidering the subject were greatly displeased with what he had delivered, as it appeared to them to contain an insinuation not favourable to the character which they claimed of being *economical stewards* for the public. Mr. Rigby, a few days after, declared that the speaker had not expressed the sense of the commons: Mr. Fox immediately moved, that he had spoken the sense of the house. Lord North and the more moderate part of the ministerial adherents, though they wished the motion withdrawn, finding Mr. Fox would not comply, to avoid altercation voted in its favour: and on the 8th of June, parliament was prorogued.

CHAP. XIX.

Occupations of Howe during winter—of Washington.—Plan of the campaign—its late commencement by general Howe—desultory operations in the Jerseys.—General Howe moves from winter quarters—attempts by a stratagem to bring Washington to battle—failing in that expedient, evacuates the Jerseys.—Expedition by sea to Philadelphia.—Battle of Brandywine.—Major Ferguson essays a new species of rifle, invented by himself.—Capture of Philadelphia.—Battle of Germantown.—American fortifications on the river.—Red Bank and Mud Island taken.—American fleet burnt.—Situation of the Americans at White Marsh and Valley Forge favourable to an attack.—General Howe's inaction—he retires early to winter quarters.—Conduct of general and troops at Philadelphia.—Expedition of sir Henry Clinton up the North river.—Capture of Prescott in Rhode Island.—Northern army.—Burgoyne takes the command.—Carleton offended with the appointment, resigns his employment.—Burgoyne purchases the aid of Indian savages—number of his troops.—Expedition of colonel St. Ieger.—The general's manifesto.—Capture of Ticonderoga and Fort Independence.—Destruction of American galleys.—The army reached the Hudson.—Cruelties of the Indians.—Defeat at Bennington.—Siege of Stanwix—raised.—Battle with general Gates at Stillwater.—Distressed situation of the army—desertion of the Indians—Burgoyne retreats.—Battle near Saratoga—reduced state of the army—troops surrounded.—convention with the Americans at Saratoga.

THE public attention was now turned to the campaign in America, and great expectations were formed that it would terminate in the complete reduction of the colonies. The general plan was nearly the same as in the preceding year; that the Canadian army should co-operate with general Howe, and thus the command of New-York province divide the northern from the southern colonies.

A body of provincial loyalists was formed under the direction of the commander in chief; they were allowed the same pay as the regulars, and officered by gentlemen who had been obliged to leave their respective habitations for their attachment to the royal cause. Inexperienced and not inured to military discipline, they were not yet fit for active service and were therefore so stationed as to allow the veterans to take the field. General Howe himself enjoyed every luxury at New York which he could have found in the metropolis of Britain: his favourite occupation was gaming, a pastime in which many of his young officers became thoroughly initiated. There were routs, balls, and assemblies in great abundance: so that the head-quarters bore the appearance of a gay and voluptuous city in the time of peace, rather than a military station for watching and annoying the enemy in war.* Such were the pursuits of the British commander from December to June. While general Howe thus amused himself and his troops with the diversions and pleasures of New-York, Washington was very differently employed. The difficulties which, notwithstanding the forbearance of his antagonist, the American commander had to encounter, were extremely arduous. The provincial forces were hitherto but a militia, both in their discipline and

* Stedman's History of the American war, vol. i. p. 287.

[Proceedings of Washington. Expedition to Danbury, &c.]

the tenure of their service: the late success at Trenton promoted the disposition of the colonists to resist; but on the other hand, the severity of the season suspended their military ardour, inasmuch that about the middle of February the colonial army did not exceed four thousand men;* and this small body of raw peasants was moreover sickly. Nevertheless for four months they occupied a position at Morristown, not fifty miles from the brave and numerous veterans of the royal army, where they not only experienced no annoyance from general Howe,† but harrassed and distressed the British posts and foraging detachments. Washington did not fail to profit by the cessation of British effort. The boundless spirit of individual independence, which so naturally followed the American claims and assertions, was adverse to the operation of authority, and especially to that prompt and implicit submission which is necessary in military bodies. Washington saw that the powers which were allowed in the various gradations of command, were inadequate to their object: hitherto the commander in chief himself was obliged to act according to the specific instructions of the congress. The general represented the disadvantages which accrued to the common cause from authority so fettered; and such was the influence of his known wisdom and patriotism, that he was vested with full and ample powers to collect an army of foot and horse in addition to those which were already voted, to raise artillery and engineers, and to establish their pay. Thus empowered to organize an army, the next care of Washington was to bind the troops to military fidelity as well as political allegiance. To the powerful motives of conceived patriotism and freedom he added the cement of religion, and, with the approbation of congress, proposed an oath of adherence to the provincial cause. Provisions so wise produced the expected success; the colonists soon ceased to be an irregular militia, and became skilful and disciplined soldiers. During the same important interval, twenty thousand stand of arms arrived from the continent of Europe, and before the expiration of the spring the hopes and spirits of the Americans were revived and invigorated to meet the dangers of the approaching campaign. Such were the efforts of Washington during the momentous period which the British general passed in pleasurable quarters.

Summer being commenced, Howe proposed to begin the operations of the present campaign, according to the same mode in which he terminated the last, and to send out detachments, while with the main army he continued in his present residence. Upon the Hudson river, about fifty miles from New York, on the western shore, is a place called Peek's Hill, which served as a port to Courtland Manor, and where stores and provisions were received for the American army: to distress the enemy, general Howe thought it advisable to attempt the seizure of this port before the main army took the field. Accordingly he detached colonel Bird with five hundred men upon this service. On the approach of the British corps, the Americans, after setting fire to the barracks and store-houses, evacuated the fort: by the conflagration, the king's troops were prevented from seizing the expected provision and ammunition, but they effected the chief purpose of their expedition by curtailing the resources

* Washington's official Letters, vol. ii. p. 51.

† Ramsay, the American historian, informs us, that his countrymen were astonished at the inaction of the British during so critical a period, vol. ii. p. 2.

[Howe evacuates Jersey. Expedition to Philadelphia.]

of the enemy. Another detachment of two thousand men was sent, under general Tryon and sir William Erskine, to Danbury, in the confines of Connecticut, where they destroyed a large quantity of stores: fatigued by their march, they were attacked by the enemy, but repulsed the assailants, though with the loss of two hundred of their own troops. Lord Cornwallis also surprised and defeated a body of colonists near Brunswick. The Americans, on the other hand, destroyed a considerable quantity of our provision near Sag Harbour in Long Island. General Stevens with two thousand provincials attempted to surprise the forty-second regiment cantoned at Piscataway, amounting to less than a thousand men; but after a furious engagement, the gallant Highlanders, under their able commander colonel Stirling, completely routed the enemy. While this desultory warfare was carried on by detachments, the commander in chief remained quiet at New York another month. His alleged reason for beginning the campaign so late was, that *there was no green forage on the ground*:* there was plenty of CORN AND HAY, which persons conversant in the management of horses affirmed to be preferable food for them when employed in active service, but the general professed a different opinion.

On the 12th of June, the general with thirty thousand men marched towards Courtland Manor, where the enemy were posted to the number of eight thousand. The position of Washington appeared to the British commander so strong, that, notwithstanding his great superiority both in numbers and discipline, he deemed it inexpedient to venture an attack; after in vain trying to bring the American general to battle, he, on the 19th of June, pretended to make a precipitate retreat. The Americans left their fastnesses to pursue the enemy; Howe marched his army back, and sent lord Cornwallis to secure the passes, so that the provincials being hemmed in might be compelled to fight. On the 26th, his lordship met the advanced body of the enemy, attacked them with great fury, and soon put them to route. Washington, finding that he had been deceived by a feint, immediately returned to his hilly station, and occupied the passes before lord Cornwallis could arrive. Not having succeeded in this stratagem, general Howe somewhat hastily concluded that it would be useless to attempt any other expedient for bringing the enemy to battle; he therefore resolved to abandon the Jerseys, and crossed with his army to Staten Island. The general himself in a plan of operations sent to lord George Germaine, had declared his intention of penetrating to Philadelphia, through Jersey: the minister had approved and strongly enjoined him in all his movements to have in view co-operation with the northern army. Certain military critics allowed, that if he had continued in the Jerseys, by intercepting Washington's convoys he might have compelled him either to fight, or with his army to perish by famine; that the short and direct road to Philadelphia was through the Jerseys, and that with thirty thousand veterans he could have easily forced his way through eight thousand so lately levied. Notwithstanding these considerations, the weight of which it required little sagacity to perceive, he determined on undertaking an expedition round the coast; nautical gentlemen represented to him, that at this season of the year the winds were very contrary; the admonitions were unavailing, he persisted in his re-

* Stedman, vol. i. p. 287.

[Disposition of the British forces. New rifle invented by Fergusson.]

solution. Leaving a considerable body of troops under general Clinton to guard New York, he embarked the rest of the army on the 5th of July, but by some unaccountable delay did not sail till the 23d. Having arrived at the capes of the Delaware, he learned that the enemy had blocked up the river, he therefore proceeded to the Chesapeake Bay, and sailed up the Elk, but did not come to land till the 24th of August. Thus, from the beginning of November the commander in chief, with thirty thousand of the bravest and best disciplined troops, opposed by less than ten thousand undisciplined recruits, had not advanced one step nearer the object of his appointment. He was in autumn, by a circuitous and difficult route, proceeding to a city, which in the foregoing winter was ready to yield, if he had advanced by a short and then unguarded road; but Philadelphia was to be captured by the hardships of a winter campaign, and not by luxurious indulgence.

On landing the army, sir William Howe published a proclamation, offering pardon and protection to all who should surrender themselves to the British army, and assuring the inhabitants that the soldiers should observe strict order and discipline on their march. General Washington informed that the army was arrived in Pennsylvania, crossed the Delaware with his army on the 11th of September. The British troops advanced to Brandywine, a river which running from the west, falls into the Delaware below Philadelphia. On the left bank, next to the city, the Americans posted themselves, and erected batteries at Chadsford, where they presumed the royal army would attempt to pass: Under cover of their batteries a body of them also occupied the right bank. General Howe detached lord Cornwallis with two battalions of British grenadiers, as many of light troops, two battalions of Hessian grenadiers, two British brigades, and part of the seventy-first regiment, to cross the river farther up, and thus gain the enemy's rear. At the same time, general Knyphausen, with another division, marched to Chadsford, against the provincials who were placed there; in this service the German experienced very important assistance from a corps of riflemen, commanded by major Patrick Fergusson. The dexterity of the provincials as marksmen had been frequently quoted, and held out as an object of terror to the British troops. Fergusson, a man of genius, which was exercised in professional attainments, invented a new species of rifle, that combined unprecedented quickness of repetition with certainty of effect, and security to the soldiers. The invention being not only approved, but highly admired, its author was appointed to form and train a corps for the purpose of practice; but an opportunity did not offer of calling their skill into action, until the period at which we are now arrived. Fergusson, with his corps, supported by Wemyss's American rangers, was appointed to cover the front of Knyphausen's troops, and scoured the ground so effectually that there was not a shot fired by the Americans to annoy the column in its march.* So secured, Knyphausen

* The meritorious conduct of Fergusson was acknowledged by the whole army, and publicly attested by order of the commander in chief.

Fergusson, in a private letter of which Dr. Adam Fergusson has transmitted me a copy, mentions a very curious incident, from which it appears that the life of the American general was in imminent danger. While Fergusson lay with a part of his riflemen on a skirt of a wood in front of general Knyphausen's division, the circumstance happened, of which the letter in question gives the fol-

[Battle of Brandywine. Defeat of general Wayne.]

was enabled to advance without interruption, attacked the enemy, obliged them (though protected by their batteries) to cross the river, made good the passage of his own division, and opened the way to the rest of the army. Meanwhile lord Cornwallis crossed behind the enemy's rear; and general Washington, informed of this movement, sent general Sullivan with a considerable force to oppose the British detachment. The Americans seized the heights which rose from the banks; having his rear and right flank covered by woods, and his left by the river. The British commander began the attack by four o'clock in the afternoon; the provincials, after a very obstinate resistance, were driven into the woods; and posting themselves on another eminence, made a second stand still more vigorous than the first: they were again dislodged, and forced to retire with the loss of a thousand killed and wounded, and four hundred taken prisoners. The main body of the British army had now crossed the river; sir William Howe turned the right of Washington's troops, Knyphausen was in front, the Brandywine on the left, and the Delaware at a small distance in the rear. Lord Cornwallis, after his victory, was able to join the general. The only way by which the provincials could escape was between the Delaware and the division under the immediate command of general Howe; it was apprehended, that if the commander in chief had advanced farther round the enemy's flank, he might have enclosed the provincial force: this movement, however, was not attempted, and general Washington drew off his troops during the night to Chester, near Philadelphia. Even the next morning, it was alleged, that the British troops might have intercepted the Americans; but the experiment was not tried. General Howe remained several days at Brandywine after the enemy had retired. Washington employed this very unexpected cessation in collecting his dispersed troops, and supplying from his magazines the stores which had been lost in the battle. On the 20th of September, intelligence being received that general Wayne was concealed, with fifteen hundred men, in the wood on the left wing of the British army; general Howe dispatched major-general Grey with a strong body to surprise and dislodge the provincial detachment. Proceeding with great secrecy, the royal troops executed this project so

lowing account:—"We had not lain long when a rebel officer remarkable by a Hussar dress, passed towards our army, within a hundred yards of my right flank, not perceiving us. He was followed by another dressed in dark green and blue, mounted on a good bay horse, with a remarkable large high cocked hat. I ordered three good shots to steal near to them and fire at them; but the idea disgusted me; I recalled the order. The Hussar in returning made a circuit, but the other passed within a hundred yards of us; upon which I advanced from the wood towards him. Upon my calling he stopped; but after looking at me proceeded. I again drew his attention, and made sign to him to stop, levelling my piece at him; but he slowly continued his way. As I was within that distance at which, in the quickest firing, I could have lodged half a dozen balls in or about him before he was out of my reach, I had only to determine; but it was not pleasant to fire at the back of an unoffending individual, who was acquitting himself very coolly of his duty, so I let him alone. The day after, I had been telling this story to some wounded officers who lay in the same room with me, when one of our surgeons who had been dressing the wounded rebel officers, came in and told us, that they had been informing him, that general Washington was all the morning with the light troops, and only attended by a French officer in a Hussar dress, he himself dressed and mounted in every point as above described. I am not sorry that I did not know at the time who it was."

[Capture of Philadelphia. Battle of Germantown.]

completely, that they killed or took about four hundred, with the loss of only seven soldiers and one officer. On the 22d of September, sir William Howe crossed the Schuylkill with his whole army: on the 26th, he advanced to Germantown; and the following day, with Cornwallis, took possession of Philadelphia without opposition. Being thus masters of the capital of North America, the British commander next turned his attention to establish a communication with the fleet, by removing the obstructions which the Americans had placed in the river, and strengthened it by forts. There were disposed rows of chevaux-de-frize, floating batteries, and gun-boats, in the most accessible parts of the river, covered by intrenchments and redoubts on the banks. General Washington, now encamped at Skippach Creek, on the eastern side of the Schuylkill, formed the design of surprising the British camp at Germantown. The 3d of October was the day appointed for executing this project: Washington advancing with his force divided into five columns, attempted to separate the British army so as to ensure success in the different flanks. The fortieth regiment and colonel Musgrave having the advanced post were first attacked, but the skill and activity of that officer, together with the determined courage of the soldiers, arrested the progress of the enemy, prevented the separation of the right and left flank, and gave the whole army time to form the line. Major-general Grey brought up a division with such rapidity and force, that the Americans were obliged to act on the defensive; the engagement became general, and was for some hours very warm; at length, part of the right wing forced the enemy's left to give ground, and fly with great precipitation. The rest of the provincials also retreated, attempted to rally on rising grounds near the scene of action, and pretended to renew the battle; but this was only a feint to secure their retreat. In their flight they were favoured by a fog, which prevented the British troops from an effectual pursuit. Though the king's troops drove the enemy from the field, our loss was very considerable; six hundred were killed and wounded; and, among the former, colonels Agnew and Bird, two officers of very high character; the killed, wounded, and taken prisoners of the enemy amounted to about twelve hundred. On the 10th of October, general Howe, withdrawing his army from Germantown, encamped in the immediate vicinity of Philadelphia, whence he sent detachments to co-operate with the fleet in the Delaware. One of the strongest of the American forts was at Billing's Harbour, on the Jersey side of the river, thither the commander in chief detached three regiments under colonel Stirling to attack the place: on his approach the works were abandoned. The English fleet being arrived in the Delaware, preparations were made for attacking the water force of the provincials. The Americans had constructed a very strong fortification on Mud Island, in the Delaware, off the mouth of the Schuylkill; this post commanded the navigation of the river, and unless reduced, could intercept the stores and provisions of the army; opposite to this place was Red Bank, which commanded the fort on the east; while Province Island, possessed by the British, adjoined in the west, and the British fleet on the south. Colonel Stirling applied to general Howe for leave to fortify so advantageous a position, the general did not think proper to comply: the Americans did not however neglect to secure so important a means of defence, and with great rapidity raised fortifications. At length discovering the advantage of

[Red Bank and Mud Island taken. Inactivity of general Howe.]

Red Bank, general Howe sent colonel Donop with three battalions of Hessian grenadiers to attempt the redoubt by assault. The German leader setting out on the 20th of October, arrived the next day at the place of destination. Having marched up in the face of the enemy's fire, not only from the fort, but from floating batteries and galleys on the river and forces in an extensive outwork, they arrived before the redoubt, which they found to be more than eight feet high, with a parapet boarded and fraized, and impregnable without scaling ladders; for the commander in chief had omitted to furnish them with this implement so necessary in storming a fort. With victory within their reach, if the proper preparations had been made, they were through this negligence obliged to retreat precipitately through the triple fire; and lost their leader, who was mortally wounded, and died three days after in the hands of the enemy. Five ships of war had attempted to second Donop's efforts, but two of them ran aground: one the *Augusta*, was set on fire, by the enemy; and the other, the *Merlin*, was obliged to be abandoned. Meanwhile preparations were going on for attacking Mud Island from the western shore, but the batteries were not opened till the 10th of November; the part of the fleet destined to co-operate was prevented by contrary winds from advancing till the fifteenth. The provincials quitted the fleet the following night, and two days after Red Bank was also abandoned; a few of the American galleys escaped, but the greater number were destroyed: a communication was opened between the fleet and the army.

While detachments were performing these services, general Howe, with the main army, continued inactive at Germantown, from the 3d of October to the 4th of December. General Washington having received a re-enforcement of four thousand men from the northern army, Howe hoped he would venture a battle; with this view he marched to White Marsh, where the American general was encamped. On the 5th and 6th, he offered battle to the Americans, but they would not come from their lines; general Howe made no attempt to force the camp, and during the night changed his position. Columns under lord Cornwallis and general Grey dislodged the enemy from two of their outposts; the general still judged it imprudent to venture the safety of his troops by attacking the enemy in their intrenchments. It had been expected that the commander in chief would have attacked the provincials on the rear, where their fortifications were by no means so strong as in the front and flanks, and as the roads in that quarter were very excellent, general Washington himself apprehended that such an attempt would be made, but he was mistaken. Indeed, the principles by which the British general directed his military operations, were such as baffled even the sagacity of Washington to discover. The general, without making any attempt on the practicable part of the enemy's camp, retired with his army to Philadelphia. General Howe began the campaign in 1777 with thirty thousand veterans, the enemy with eight thousand recruits: by all his marches, counter-marches, detachments, expeditions, and battles, he got fresh winter quarters, without impairing the force of his enemy: the attainment of the object for which he was appointed was no nearer than when he sailed from Halifax. Thus closed a campaign, with few parallels in military history for uniting efficiency of force and multiplicity

[Situation of the Americans at Valley Forge. Expedition up North river.]

of operation with futility of result. Such most impartial history transmit to posterity the warfare of general Howe in America.

The commander found Philadelphia equally productive of pleasurable indulgence as New-York. The winter was spent in dissipation of every kind, but particularly in the frenzy of gaming, which was not only permitted by the general, but sanctioned by his own daily practice. A German officer kept a pharo bank, and accumulated a considerable fortune by preying on the British youth, who, through want of employment from the professional inaction of their leader, were driven to fill up their time with this pernicious pastime, and encouraged by the example which he exhibited. Many were utterly ruined, and obliged to sell their commissions, because, instead of pursuing Washington and compelling him to fight or surrender, general Howe suffered his gallant and active troops to spend the winter in idleness at Philadelphia. The dissipation spread through the army, and tended as usual to produce indolence and want of discipline, which relaxed both bodies and minds. Washington, apprised of the retirement of the British army, quitted his camp, and took a position at Valley Forge, on the north side of the Schuylkill, and determined to winter there in a camp, instead of retiring to the towns of Lancaster, York, and Carlisle, at a greater distance from Philadelphia; by which means he would have left a large fertile district to supply the royalists with provisions. Though his army was destitute of clothing, and many other necessities, and ill provided with tents and other accommodations for rest, yet did raw and undisciplined troops from enthusiastic attachment to their meritorious general, imitation of his example, and ardent patriotism, bear all those hardships without repining. Among other wants of the Americans, was a great scarcity of intrenching tools; from this cause their lines were much weaker than usual: the approach in front was almost level ground; on the front and right, there was a ditch six feet wide, and three in depth; and a mound of small width, that could be easily broken by cannon. On the rear there was a precipice, impassable except by a defile, which could be easily occupied. On the left was the Schuylkill, which, if it guarded them from approach on that side, also cut off their flight if successfully attacked on the front and right.* It has been generally agreed by military judges, that if the British commander had made the attempt during any part of the winter, there was a moral certainty of crushing the whole army of the enemy, but from December to May he suffered them to be unmolested.

At New-York sir Henry Clinton received from Europe considerable re-enforcements, to undertake an expedition up the Hudson river to open a communication with the northern army. A division of his troops having stormed Fort Montgomery, he himself attacked Fort Clinton. The approach to this post was over a pass of about one hundred yards square, between a lake and a precipice that overhung the river: the defile was covered with felled trees, which prevented the troops from advancing with either quickness or order; and from the fort they were galled with a dreadful fire. Notwithstanding the dangers and difficulties they had to encounter and surmount; the soldiers, both British and foreign, pressed forward with undaunted courage and perseverance, and arrived at the foot of the work. The Americans defended themselves with intrepid cou-

* Stedman, Andrews.

[Capture of general Prescott. Expedition of general Burgoyne.]

rage, but at length were overpowered by the resolute and active valour of the king's forces; and, after discharging a last volley, surrendered at discretion. In no action that occurred during the war, was British valour more conspicuously displayed than in this expedition, and the conquerors treated their prisoners with a humanity equal to their gallantry.

This advantage having been achieved by land, commodore Hotham, who commanded the naval equipment, was no less successful by water, and, either under his own immediate direction, or through sir James Wallace, destroyed the greater part of the American shipping on the river. A messenger arriving from the northern army, urged general Clinton to penetrate so far that he might co-operate with those troops; but he deeming the attempt impracticable, returned to New-York. While Clinton was employed on the North river, Barton, an American colonel, formed a project of surprising general Prescott at Rhode Island, with a view to exchange him for general Lee. The American had learned that Prescott's head-quarters were at the west side of the island, near the shore, and that, trusting for security to a sloop of war which anchored in the bay, he was guarded by only one sentinel, and was about a mile from his troops. Colonel Barton, with some officers and soldiers, landing at night unperceived by the guard-ship, effected their purpose, and by this means soon procured the restoration of Lee to the service of the provincials.

While in the south the British arms were obtaining unproductive victories, ultimately disastrous, by consuming our resources and impairing our strength; in the north, they experienced signal defeat, and a complete overthrow.

The object of the Canadian expedition was to effect a co-operation with the principal force; and the command of the armament was conferred on general Burgoyne. Sir Guy Carleton, from his official situation in Canada, his conduct, and especially his defence of Quebec, might have reasonably expected this appointment; he was an older general, of more military experience, and better acquainted with the country, its inhabitants, and resources. His character commanded greater authority than Burgoyne's had hitherto established; the professional reputation of Burgoyne, indeed, was liable to no objection, but he had not, like Carleton, obtained celebrity. As no military grounds could be alleged for superseding Carleton to make room for Burgoyne, his promotion was imputed to parliamentary influence, more than to his official talents. Carleton, disgusted with a preference by no means merited, as soon as he heard of the appointment, resigned his government. The event was such as might be expected from the delegation of important trust, from extrinsic considerations instead of the fitness of the trustee for the service required.

The plan of the expedition through the wilds of America was concerted in London between general Burgoyne and lord George Germaine. It was agreed, that besides regular troops, Indian savages should be employed by the British commander; the alleged reason for calling in such auxiliaries was, that if they were not engaged in our service they would join the provincials; they would be useful in desultory warfare, and the British troops would moderate their atrocity. The force required by Burgoyne was eight thousand regulars, two thousand Canadians, and a thousand Indians. Of these near seven thousand two hundred vete-

[Proclamation. Ticonderoga abandoned. Defeat of colonel Francis.]

rans, including Brunswick mercenaries,* a considerable part of the Canadian militia, and the requisite number of Indians, were ready when Burgoyne arrived from England to commence the campaign. He was besides furnished with chosen officers, among whom were generals Phillips, Fraser, Powel, and Hamilton. Having sent colonel St. Leger with a body of light troops and Indians to create a diversion on lake Ontario and the Mohawk river, he himself, on the 16th of June, set out from Fort St. John, proceeded up lake Champlain, and landed near Crown Point: here he gave the Indians a war feast, at which he made them a speech, praising and stimulating their courage, but exhorted them to repress their ferocity. At Putnam Creek he judged it expedient to publish a comminatory manifesto, in which, by a profusion of epithets and rhetorical figures, he represented the Americans guilty of the most flagrant enormities; he threatened the severest punishments against those who should still adhere to the cause of rebellious subjects; he should send the Indian forces to overtake the hardened enemies of Britain and their own country; he declared the most assured confidence that he should be able to subjugate all stubborn and refractory revolters. After having expatiated on the wickedness of their proceedings and the vengeance which, if they did not repent, they must expect from justice armed with his irresistible powers, he concluded with explaining to them what the penitent might hope from his wise, generous, and forbearing mercy. It required no great sagacity to divine that men, who conceived themselves fighting for their liberties, and for two years had shown a promptness to face any danger on account of so valuable an object, were not to be frightened from their purpose by high sounding words. The impolicy of this declaratory boasting was obvious,† and, in the opinion of impartial men, stamped the character of its author as deficient in sound wisdom, and that knowledge of human nature, without which neither a general nor a statesman can expect to succeed in arduous undertakings: his denunciation tended only to excite stronger resentment in the colonists, and to inspire more vigorous exertions to defend themselves from the threatened atrocities. Gates the American general, replied to this production in a very plain but strong manifesto, which formed a striking contrast to the pompous phraseology and empty gasconades of Burgoyne's performance.‡ The British general advancing on the 2d of July, reached Ticonderoga, which, with another fort opposite to it, recently built, under the name of Mount Independence, were immediately abandoned by the Americans.§ The general despatched commodore Lutwiche, with the naval armament, in pursuit of the enemy's fleet that was conveying the provisions from the evacuated garrison to Skenesborough; overtaking them near the place of their destination, he captured some of their galleys, and set fire to the rest.

On the 6th of July, the advanced corps of grenadiers and light infantry, under general Fraser, consisting of near twelve hundred men, came up with the enemy's rear, commanded by colonel Francis, composed of

* Stedman, p. 320.

† See Annual Register.

‡ Speaking of the proffered mercy immediately after the threat of sending Indian savages upon the provincials, he said, "*the tender mercies of the Indian tomahawk we will not solicit.*" See in state papers 1777, both the manifestoes.

§ Stedman and Ramsay.

[Dilatory movements of Burgoyne. Defeat at Bennington.]

fifteen hundred of their chosen troops. Fraser, notwithstanding his inferiority, attacked the provincials, who received him with the firmest intrepidity. The battle was long doubtful, but the arrival of general Reidesel with the Brunswick troops determined the event. The Americans, conceiving that the whole German force had arrived, retreated with the greatest precipitation. They lost two hundred killed, as many taken prisoners, and about six hundred wounded, of whom the greatest number died in the woods. Of the British, about one hundred and forty, including twenty officers, were killed and wounded. Colonel Hill, with the ninth regiment, was sent to pursue a party of the enemy that had retired to Wood's Creek. Having overtaken them, the British leader perceived that they were much superior in numbers to his corps; he nevertheless engaged, and posted his men so judiciously as to prevent their repeated attempts to surround him by their numbers. After a battle of three hours, the provincials were forced to retreat with great slaughter. Schuyler, the American general, employed a stratagem frequently used afterwards in the course of the war; he wrote a letter to general Sullivan, intended to fall into the hands of Burgoyne; which being taken and perused by the British commander, so puzzled and perplexed him as to retard his operations several days, before he could determine whether he was to advance or retreat. At last he resolved to penetrate to Hudson river, while major-general Philips should bring the stores from Ticonderoga along lake George to Fort George, whence there was a wagon road to Fort Edward on the Hudson. Military critics affirmed that it would have been much wiser in Burgoyne to have crossed the country from Skenesborough to lake George, embarked, and proceeded a considerable part of the route by water, than to have marched by land through a wild, woody, and swampy country. Their march was frequently interrupted by morasses, impassable without bridges, of which the construction employed a considerable time. Burgoyne alleged, that if he had returned to lake George, the retrograde movement would have damped the ardour of his troops; but the necessary slowness of their progress through those wilds and intricacies was more likely to repress their animation. It was the 30th of July before they arrived at the river; there they were obliged to wait several days, until their provisions, stores, and other necessities should be embarked. Burgoyne's expedition had at first struck great consternation into the minds of the Americans; but, on finding his advances much more tardy than they expected, their spirits began to revive, and they made various dispositions for recruiting their strength: re-enforcements were sent to general Schuyler, who was posted at Saratoga on the Hudson, about twenty miles north from Albany. They sent Arnold to watch the motions of colonel St. Leger, and to prevent his co-operation with the main army. St. Leger was now advanced to Fort Stanwix on the Mohawk river: the general saw it was necessary to co-operate with that officer, and to move rapidly forward; but he had a very large train of artillery: horses and carriages were wanting, provisions also were nearly exhausted. Having learned that the Americans had deposited a great quantity of stores at Bennington, about twenty-four miles east from Hudson river, Burgoyne resolved to attempt the seizure of this magazine: and despatched colonel Baum, a German officer, on that service, with six hundred troops, including dragoons. It was represented to the general, that the proposed enterprise would require no

[Siege of Fort Stanwix raised.]

less than three thousand men; and that Germans, from the slowness of their movement, were by no means so fit for surprising the enemy as the British; that they were, besides, totally unacquainted with the country and the language, so that they could receive no information even from friends of the royal cause. The general, however, persisted in his resolution: the habitual slowness of German movements, added to the badness of the roads and the want of carriages, rendered Baum's advance so tedious, that the enemy were informed of his approach, and prepared for his reception. When he arrived at Bennington, he found the enemy so strong, that, with the small body intrusted to him, it would have been madness to attempt an attack. He accordingly fortified himself, and sent a message to the general, that the scheme would be impracticable without a re-enforcement. Colonel Breyman was sent to his assistance, with five hundred Germans, who advanced with their usual tardiness.* Meanwhile Starke, an American general, who was on his way with a thousand men from New-Hampshire and Massachusetts to join the provincial army under Schuyler, hearing of Baum's expedition to Bennington, turned aside to second the efforts of Warner, who commanded the provincials at that place. On the 16th of August, the Americans surrounded Baum, who, though he made a gallant resistance, was overpowered by numbers,† himself mortally wounded, and his troops put to the route. Elated with their victory, the provincials marched to attack Breyman, who ignorant of Baum's defeat, was advancing to his assistance. Breyman had just met some fugitives from Baum's detachment, when the Americans, before he had time to order a retreat, fell upon his troops: he made a very valiant defence, but was at last compelled to retire. The loss of the royalists in both battles amounted to six hundred men: this first material check which the king's troops suffered, is imputed to the employment of Germans on a service requiring rapid expedition, and to the smallness of their number.

Colonel St. Leger invested Fort Stanwix, a small fort, defended by seven hundred men. On the 3d of August, being informed that a thousand provincials were marching to its relief, the British leader despatched air John Johnson, with a party of regulars and a great number of savages, to lie in ambush in the woods: the stratagem succeeded, the provincials were unexpectedly attacked on all sides by the fire of the British troops, and the tomahawks of the Indians. Having made a very brave resistance, after losing half their number, the remainder were enabled to retreat with some degree of order. Meanwhile the besieged, being apprised that the artillery of their assailants was too light to make any impression on the fort, and being well supplied with provisions, rejected every overture to induce them to surrender. A man belonging to the fort, pretending to be a deserter, came to the British camp, and told St. Leger that Arnold was advancing with two thousand men, and ten pieces of cannon, to protect the fort, and that general Burgoyne's army had been cut to pieces. This account made little impression on the colonel, but produced an immediate effect on the savages, of whom a large party instantly left the camp, and the rest threatened to follow if the British

* So foolishly attached were they to forms of discipline, that in marching through *thickets* they stopped ten times in an hour, to dress their ranks. See Stedman, vol. i. p. 332.

† Stedman, p. 333.

[Cruelty of the savages rouses the Americans to more active resistance.]

commander would not begin to retreat. St. Leger was compelled to abandon his enterprise, and to retreat precipitately with the loss of his artillery and stores. The failure of this undertaking so soon after the defeat at Bennington, damped the spirits of the royal army, and elated the Americans. The conduct of their savage auxiliaries was extremely prejudicial to the British interest. The admonitions of Burgoyne had little more effect on these murderous tribes, than if lectures on humanity had been addressed to the tigers of Hindostan; and, indeed, the expectations of mildness were as reasonable from habitual butchery as from instinctive ferocity; the barbarities of the Indians, like those of their four-footed brethren, were totally indiscriminate; loyalists and revolters, if they came into the power of the savages, experienced the same fate. An instance of cruelty which happened about this time was peculiarly afflicting: Mr. Jones, an officer in the British service, had paid his addresses to the daughter of an American loyalist, a young lady in the bloom of youthful beauty: she listened to his suit and consented to become his bride. Anxious for her safety, he offered to reward with a barrel of rum any person who should escort her from her father's house to a place where he was himself to meet her, and that very day receive her hand. Two Indians undertook the task, and had conducted her near the appointed spot, when a dispute arose between them, which should present the lady to her lover. Both were eager for the reward, and the one to prevent the other from receiving it, murdered the blooming innocent maiden; and the youth, instead of his beloved bride, found a mangled corpse. This and other instances of atrocity inflamed the American people: the cruelties of the Indians, and the cause in which they were engaged, were associated together, and presented in one view to the alarmed inhabitants. They, whose interest it was to draw forth the militia in support of American independence, strongly expressed their execrations of the army which submitted to accept of Indian aid, and they loudly condemned that government which could call such auxiliaries into a civil contest, as were calculated not to subdue, but to exterminate a people whom they affected to reclaim as subjects. Their cruel mode of warfare, by putting to death, as well the helpless infant and defenceless female, as the resisting armed man, excited an universal spirit of resistance. In conjunction with other circumstances, it impressed on the minds of the inhabitants a general conviction, that a vigorous determined opposition was the only alternative for the preservation of their property, their children, and their wives. Could they have indulged the hope of security and protection while they remained peaceably at their homes, they would have found many excuses for declining to assume the profession of soldiers; but when they contrasted the dangers of a manly resistance with those of a passive inaction, they chose the former as the least of two unavoidable evils. All the feeble aid which the royal army received from their Indian auxiliaries was infinitely overbalanced by the odium it brought on their cause, and by that determined spirit of opposition which the dread of savage cruelties excited.* In the command of the American army a change took place which proved fatal to the royal interests; general Gates was appointed commander in chief of the northern forces. The British commander

* Ramsay, vol. ii. p. 38.

[Battle of Stillwater. Retreat of Burgoyne.]

having by great industry collected about thirty days provisions, and constructed a bridge of boats, on the 14th of September crossed the river, and occupied the heights of Saratoga, about thirty miles from Albany. Thence the army set forward in a southern course; but the march was obstructed by the difficulties of the road which the rains had almost rendered impassable, and retarded by a great train of artillery, which required frequent construction of bridges. On the 19th of September they arrived at Stillwater, where the enemy were encamped; the right wing was commanded by general Burgoyne, and covered by general Fraser, with the grenadiers and light infantry; the left by general Philips and Reidesel. The enemy attempted to turn the right wing of the king's troops, and attacked them in the river; Fraser with his brigade holding the extreme position on that side, perceived their design, and prevented its execution. Changing their situation, they attacked the British line in front of the right division: the battle began at three o'clock in the afternoon, and continued till after sunset. The right wing only of our army was completely engaged: the twentieth, twenty-first, and sixty-second regiments bore the brunt of the battle with the most intrepid firmness and enterprising courage; they were very hardly pressed, when major-general Philips found means to send artillery through a thick wood, which supported and aided their efforts. The twenty-fourth regiment, with the grenadiers and light infantry, also came forward to assist their fellow-soldiers. The Americans fought with no less coolness, valour, and skill: at last, they left the British army in possession of the field: the loss on each side amounted to about six hundred men. Though our troops remained masters of the scene of action, yet the battle of Stillwater was by no means favourable to their ultimate success: they were far advanced in an enemy's country; their numbers were diminishing, without the means of re-enforcement; their provisions were sufficient only for a temporary supply; the army of the enemy was daily increasing, and as it grew in force, it became the abler to prevent our troops from successful foraging. The savages showed an inclination to leave the British, from the time the hopes of plunder were disappointed; and it was apprehended they would become enemies, as well as deserters: a few days after, the Indians actually left the British camp. Burgoyne had advanced in conformity to the minister's plan, in expectation of assistance from generals Clinton and Howe. The expected aid had failed; and without it, the project was no longer practicable. Before him was an enemy already strong and collecting new strength, in a country abounding with difficulties: the only means of saving himself and his troops therefore from destruction appeared to be a retreat. Generals Gates and Arnold, well informed of Burgoyne's embarrassment, projected his interception. For that purpose they sent an expedition under colonel Brown, who, from his activity and knowledge of the country, turned the British rear, arrived at lake George, and surprised and took boats that were conveying provisions to our troops. Burgoyne began his retreat towards Saratoga: his difficulties were accumulating; his army did not exceed five thousand men: their stores were almost exhausted; and a fresh supply being cut off, he was obliged to restrict his soldiers to a reduced allowance. The enemy had augmented their forces, and nearly surrounded him on all sides; it was necessary to dislodge them before it would be possible to return to the lakes. To effect this purpose, on the 7th

[Battle of Saratoga. Distressed state of the British army.]

of October he headed fifteen hundred men himself, accompanied by generals Reidesel, Philips, and Fraser. This body had arrived within half a mile of the enemy's intrenchments, when a furious attack was made by the Americans on the left wing and centre of the royal army. Major Auckland, commanding the grenadiers, sustained their first onset with great resolution; but their numbers soon enabled the enemy to extend their attack along the whole line. The right had not yet been engaged; but the enemy moving round to prevent a retreat, the light infantry and twenty-fourth regiment instantly formed to defeat their purpose. Meanwhile the left wing, nearly overpowered by numbers, attempted to retire, and was on the point of being overwhelmed, when the corps sent to the assistance of the right division, rapidly changing their movement, endeavoured to secure the left from impending destruction, by which timely aid they at last made good their retreat to the camp. The right was also compelled to retire, with the loss of many men and several pieces of cannon, and the Americans attempted to force the intrenchments; on that side the engagement was a long time doubtful, but Arnold being wounded, the provincials were repulsed. On the left wing of the camp, the American attack was more successful: they carried, sword in hand, the lines which were defended by colonel Breyman and the German troops, and also took the baggage, stores, and artillery. In this battle, among the slain were colonel Breyman and general Fraser: and a considerable number of officers were killed or wounded on both sides. During the night, the general, aware that in his present position the enemy would in the morning renew the battle with almost certain success, changed his position with his whole army, and occupied a very strong post. Convinced that nothing less than a decisively successful action could extricate him from his difficulties, the next day, from his advantageous ground, he offered the enemy battle. The provincials, however, were projecting measures much safer to themselves, and no less dangerous to their adversaries. They advanced strong bodies of troops beyond Burgoyne's right, with a view to enclose his army. Burgoyne, perceiving this operation, resolved to hasten his retreat to Saratoga, and accordingly, during that night, began his march. He did not reach Saratoga till the 10th; there he found the passes before him secured by the enemy, the shores of the river lined with troops, and the whole navigation entirely in their power. He attempted to retreat to Fort George, to make a rapid march along the western bank of the river, and cross by the ford at Fort St. Edward's, but received intelligence that both the fort and road were beset by the enemy. The condition of the British army was now most deplorable: worn down by incessant exertion and obstinate contest, disappointed of expected aid, in their distress deserted by their auxiliaries, compelled to abandon their object without any prospect of a safe retreat, with their numbers reduced from eight thousand to three thousand five hundred, their provision exhausted, surrounded by an army four times their number, and exposed to continual cannonade, fast lessening their before impaired force.* This dismal situation they bore with the constancy of British soldiers; they eagerly wished for a battle to extricate themselves, or die in the attempt; but this alternative the enemy would not afford.

* Stedman, Andrews, and Ramsay.

[Surrender of Burgoyne. State of Ireland.]

On the 13th of October, Burgoyne, seeing every hope of relief vanished, took an exact account of provisions, and found there was subsistence only for five days. He called a council of war, and that he might obtain the sense of the army as generally as possible, with the higher officers were included the captains. The result was an unanimous determination to open a treaty with general Gates. That very night, at nine o'clock, a messenger was despatched to the enemy's camp, and the next morning was appointed for commencing the negotiation. The British army, equally incapable of subsisting in its present situation, or making its way to a better, lay entirely at the mercy of the enemy. The terms proffered in those circumstances were very moderate; besides the articles that related to the maintenance and accommodation of the army on its way to Boston, the principal conditions were, that the troops should be allowed to march out of the camp with all the honours of war, to a fixed place where they were to deposit their arms, and to sail from Boston to Europe, on a promise not to serve again in America during the present war; the baggage was not to be searched or molested, but private property was to be held sacred: all persons of whatever country were to be included in the capitulation, and the Canadians to be returned to their own country, subject to the conditions of the convention. On this melancholy occasion, general Gates conducted himself with the greatest humanity and generosity, and not only treated the wounded with the most feeling care and kindness, but was so considerably benevolent, that when the British were laying down their arms, he would suffer none of his soldiers to be present at so mortifying an operation.

Such was the conclusion of Burgoyne's expedition, from which the most important advantages had been predicted by ministers and their supporters. So untoward an issue in the usual course of human opinions produced charges of erroneous judgment, ill digested plans, inadequate preparations, and unskilful conduct. The train of artillery, it was said, that Burgoyne carried with him, was superfluous, and retarded movements, the success of which depended on a rapidity that should have given the enemy no time to collect an opposing force. Neither horses nor carriages were provided until the army was ready to take the field; and this circumstance detaining the forces too long at Fort Edward, was ultimately one cause of the disaster at Bennington, the prelude of greater misfortunes. After the failure at Bennington and Fort Stanwix, it was urged that Burgoyne ought to have abandoned the project of penetrating to Albany, and by no means to have crossed the Hudson: he should have secured himself at Fort Edward, where, according to the co-operation which he received from the south, he might have either advanced, or retreated to Canada. These censures of Burgoyne, if just, rest entirely on his judgment and skill, and thus ultimately fall upon the discernment of the ministers from whom he received his appointment. There was no charge of neglecting obvious opportunities, remitting personal efforts, relaxing military discipline, or sacrificing professional duty to pleasurable indulgence. If the failure of an expedition proceeded from want of skill in the commander in chief, the obvious question is, why was a person employed, who, neither by any particular act, nor his general character, had discovered sufficient military abilities for conducting so important an undertaking?

While the political counsels of England produced war with her colo-

[Question concerning money bills. Ministerial policy towards Ireland.]

nies, and military operations proved either inefficient or destructive, the state of Ireland was by no means tranquil. The octennial act, as a contemporary historian observes, was no longer an object of exultation than while it was recent.* The greater expenses attending elections were severely felt; the constant residence of the lord-lieutenant, which now first became a part of his duty, gave offence to many, who found their power and influence diminished, and a strong opposition was speedily formed. Government proposed a very considerable addition to the military establishment, and, through the influence of the lord-lieutenant, a bill to that effect, after violent contests, was passed into a law: but the opposition was powerful; their arguments making a deep impression on the people, increased the discontents; and the exertions of the anti-ministerial party soon proved successful in the parliament itself.

From the settlement of Ireland by king William, money bills had originated in the privy-council, by whom they were proposed to the commons. Agreeably to this usage, in November 1769, ministers framed a bill for a supply, and having introduced it into the house, their opponents reprobated the proposition as trenching on the rights of the national representatives. The court party quoted precedent, while their adversaries asserted the principles of the constitution: the popular champions prevailed, and the bill was rejected. To demonstrate that they were actuated by a regard for their rights, and not by parsimony, the commons granted an aid much greater than had been required; instead of a supply for three months which ministers had proposed, they provided a proportionable amount for two years. The liberality of the grant did not, in the opinion of the viceroy, compensate the deviation from the customary mode. Regarding precedent as law, in a speech to the houses he contended that the procedure had violated the just rights of the crown, and protested against the claim of the commons to the origination of money bills; but finding that the delegates of the people were not to be swayed by his asseverations contrary to their own judgment and will, Townshend prorogued parliament.

The prorogation of the national council soon after the commencement of its deliberations, and on account of an assertion of constitutional right, rapidly and widely augmented dissatisfaction. The popular leaders employed the recess in increasing their strength, concurring plans, and consolidating efforts. Unity of character exhibited internal evidence, sufficient to evince that the same heads and hearts which administered the affairs of Britain, directed the government of Ireland: in the counsels of rulers were to be seen the general causes which, in other operations, we have been contemplating;—weakness of conduct exemplified in fluctuating and inconsistent measures, and a desultory alternation of precipitate violence and conciliatory attempt. Actuated by resentment, the counsellors of the king deprived of their offices two of the most powerful favourites of the people, lord Shannon and Mr. Ponsonby, and thereby drove them to the anti-ministerial side. During the whole year 1770, the parliament did not meet, and the public dissatisfaction continued to ferment. Early in the following year, government essayed a conciliatory experiment: parliament was assembled, and addressed by the viceroy in a mild and soothing speech. Measures, he

* See Adolphus, vol. i. p. 409.

[Violence against government. Ascendency of opposition in parliament.]

said, were adopted and carried into execution for promoting the manufactures and trade of the kingdom ; through the economy of government no new aids would be required, and every thing argued prosperity to Ireland, if harmony in the senate permitted them to devise the best measures for stimulating the industry of the people. This attempt to atone by general professions of good will for specific violence, was not successful ; no mention being made of the prorogation of parliament and its cause, the source of popular discontent still remained. The vehement ardour of the Irish character burst forth in outrage against government and its adherents ; a mob armed with clubs and cutlasses surrounded the parliament house, attempted to impose an oath upon ministerial members, and proceeded to such violence as required military force to repress. In parliament, opposition was powerful and strenuous ; instead of agreeing to the address, they proposed an amendment, reprobating the general system of administration, and desiring the recall of the lord-lieutenant. Though this proposition was negatived, yet the anti-ministerial party was formidable by rank and talents, and supported by the voice of the country ; a supply of money not being wanted, the chief subject of contention was dormant, and the session was short and unimportant. During the recess the discontents continued to glow, while popular writers fanned the flame, and the Irish became more violently incensed against the ministerial party, especially the lord-lieutenant. Towards the end of the year, parliament was again assembled. The viceroy opened it with a speech, which was severely reprobated in both houses. In the peers, the duke of Leinster and lord Moira very strongly represented the distressed and discontented state of the country, and imputed it to the viceroy. The same arguments were supported in the house of commons with such force and effect that government carried the address by a majority of only five. On the grand question of a money bill, the popular party proved victorious. The commons framed a proposition of supply, which was adopted by the lords. The lord-lieutenant sent the bill to England, whence it was returned with three material alterations by the British council. The commons of Ireland saw that the amendments were in themselves expedient, but indignantly reprobated their origination. A debate ensued, of that animated eloquence which generous breasts pour out on questions concerning their freedom. Operating on the spirit of patriotism, the popular speeches were so impressive, that in favour of ministry there was not even a division ; and thus the vigorous efforts of the votaries of liberty still farther approximated the constitution of Ireland to the constitution of Britain, by ascertaining that the contributions of the people must originate with the commissioners chosen by the people. Ireland had long been the source of donatives to the creatures of administration not only connected with herself, but belonging to Britain ; and many pensions on the Irish establishment were bestowed on persons from whom no benefit appeared to the Irish themselves to have accrued to their country. The reason frequently alleged by government for such grants was, that the receivers or their connexions had been beneficial to the whole empire, and consequently to Ireland as well as every other part. The Irish patriots, in a great number of instances, denied this allegation, and affirmed that a large portion of the sums paid for Irish pensions was without any adequate advantage to their island, or indeed to Britain. This objection they in a certain degree ex-

[Effects of the American contest on Ireland. Wise government of Harcourt.]

tended to placemen: various holders of nominal offices with real salaries, receiving their emoluments from Ireland, resided in England; the popular advocates alleged that persons so circumstanced were mere pensioners under another name. About this time the customs and excise were placed under different boards, in consequence of which there was a great increase of revenue officers. Opposition proposed a resolution for expressing a disapprobation of the change: objecting to this motion, ministers contended that the alteration was extremely beneficial in preventing frauds and depredations. Their adversaries replied, that many of the persons who were nominated officers under these boards, and received salaries, actually resided in England, and contended that persons resident in Britain could not prevent contraband trade in Ireland.* These arguments appearing to a majority not without weight, the resolution was carried, and though inefficient as to any legislative purpose, manifested the disposition of the commons to confine grants within the bounds of utility, without allowing reins to ministerial largesses. While patriotic senators endeavoured to free the country from useless incumbrances, ignorant barbarians carried dissatisfaction to turbulent outrage: a banditti, associating under the name of *hearts of steel*, perpetrated horrid atrocities, and alarmed the whole country during many months. The intervention of the military strength restrained, but did not totally suppress desperadoes.

Such was the state of Ireland in October, 1772, when lord Townshend was recalled, and lord Harcourt appointed viceroy. This nobleman was individually very popular among the Irish; but the discontents still prevailed, and when the contest with the colonies came to a crisis, Irish dissatisfaction raged with augmented fury. The disputes between the popular party and administration in Ireland, naturally excited in the sister kingdom a very warm interest concerning their American fellow-subjects, whom the discontented in Ireland regarded as labouring under a similar oppression with the grievances of which they themselves complained. They considered the British government proposing to render both Ireland and America mere provinces of Britain. These sentiments were eagerly promoted by American agents, who represented Ireland as toiling, that England might wallow in luxury; the labours and manufactures of Ireland, like those of the silk-worm, were of little moment to herself, and served only to decorate the idle. Such suggestions exactly coinciding with their own notions, deeply impressed the Irish, who observed the various schemes of American policy, military efforts, and turns of fortune, with an anxiety almost sympathetic: of the people of all ranks, a much greater proportion in Ireland were friendly to the colonies, than in England. Great numbers appeared ripe for even imitating the example of the revolted provinces; but the wisdom of Harcourt avoiding the infatuation of British ministers, employed moderation without timidity, and firmness unmixed with violence. Proceeding in a course directly opposite to that which lord North and his coadjutors followed, he produced totally contrary effects; while they lost America, he saved Ireland. Dissatisfaction indeed continued, but from the time of his government the object of the disaffected was not separation from Britain, but a participation of benefits through a closer connexion. At the period to which the

* See Irish parliamentary reports.

[State of Scotland. Consequences of the union, etc.]

history has reached, the principal subject of complaint among the Irish was the restrictions under which their manufactures and trade laboured, from the illiberal and impolitic system of British monopoly.*

During the first seventeen years of the present reign, Scotland made considerable advances in various departments of industry and improvement. Her progress, however, was such as rather to afford materials of reflection to the philosophical contemplator of general results, than remarkable events for the recording pen of the historian. The acquirements of Scotland, doubtless, were originally owing to the ability, virtue, and enterprise of her people, but favourable incidents and measures tended powerfully to call her energies into effectual action. The prime source of the benefits which poured upon Scotland during the later periods of the eighteenth century, was the union; hence arose her commerce and her manufactures, or rather her access to commerce, and excitement to manufactures. Scotland was not locally more distant from the scenes of valuable trade than England, but she wanted naval force to protect her traffic, and security to her nautical enterprise she derived from the navy of England. When the interests of the poorer country were identified with the interests of the richer, the former became opulent through her characteristic industry and perseverance, while her exertions were beneficial to her partner as well as herself. The able and skilful capitalist, and the able and skilful adventurer, thus acting in concert, promoted reciprocal and mutual benefit. If participation of English trade brought riches to Glasgow and Edinburgh, Perth and Dundee, Montrose and Aberdeen, the demands of these cities, and the appendant towns and districts, enlarged the call for the productive labour of England; and the advantages were interchanged by action and reaction. Time must elapse before, in a new system, beneficial causes produce a correspondent effect: the union very early evinced its benefits to the Scottish nation;† and during the reign of George I. and II. Scotland considerably rose in commerce and opulence; political dissensions, however, impeded her advancement, and much of that ardour and perseverance which have since been exercised in enterprises profitable and honourable to individuals and the community, were then suspended by contest, or wasted in a hopeless cause. Suspected, if not convicted, of adhering to principles and interests hostile to liberty and the English constitution, Scotchmen were regarded with a jealous eye, and avenues which political establishment had opened to profit and honour were obstructed by local prejudice. The ruin of rebel hopes proved eventually advantageous to the great body of Scotchmen, and the impediments to honourable ambition and emolument were removed. The comprehensive policy of the present sovereign regarded neither place of nativity nor political party; the empire increasing in commerce, the means of opulence and aggrandizement, Scotchmen as well as Englishmen came in for their share; wealth flowed on that recently poor country, not only from her own mercantile residents, but from bold, keen, and assiduous adventurers

* See *Wealth of Nations*, *passim*.

† Inasmuch that in the rebellion, 1715, its vehement opponents, the jacobites, stipulated with the pretender adherence to the union, if he should prove successful. See Smollet and Cunningham.

[Abolition of heritable jurisdictions. State of the highlands.]

whom she sent to distant regions of the globe. The proceeds of Hindostan manufactures afforded capitals that stimulated the industry of Paisley; the produce of the Ghauts cultivated the Grampians; and the enriching inundations of the Ganges fertilized the banks of the Tay. While such an opening to Scottish adventure enlarged the capital that nurses the useful and lucrative arts, other consequences resulting from the union were especially favourable to Scottish agriculture. This momentous treaty paved the way* for the abolition of the heritable jurisdictions, which formerly enabled Scottish lords to exercise arbitrary power within their own districts, and to be separate tyrants, instead of being an order of men enjoying certain privileges for the good of the state.

This emendation was extremely beneficial to agriculture; formerly the vassals had bestowed a servile attendance on their chieftain, at whose call they had been obliged to repair to his castle, and neglect their own private affairs. In that dependent state they had estimated themselves and each other according to their place in the favour of their liege lord, and their chief occupation had been to court his good graces by being lounging retainers about his mansion. Emancipated from thralldom, they attended to the cultivation of their lands: the generous pride of personal independence succeeded the contemptible vanity which had been gratified by second hand importance. To independence the surest road was industry; the subject for the employment of their industry was their hitherto neglected land; to their inferiors they communicated a portion of that independence which they possessed and began to enjoy; they let their farms upon long leases, and dispensed with the most humiliating services; by the security of their tenures the tenants were stimulated to unusual industry. With this deliverance from feudal servitude, no doubt, the increase of manufactures and commerce very powerfully co-operated to the promotion of agriculture: agriculture, manufactures, and commerce, mutually and reciprocally advanced each other, and conjointly tended to form that middling class, which, though not before existing in Scotland, has in England proved the most efficacious supporters of our laws, liberty, and constitution. As, however, the operation of political causes is generally gradual, the progress of husbandry was not hitherto universal in Scotland; in the lowland districts it had made such considerable advances as to equal most counties in England. In the highland frontiers gentlemen were beginning to know the use of fertilizing composts adapted to the nature of the soil and climate, and by means of these to establish a regular rotation of crops: but opinion and usage surviving institution, the encouragement to farmers was in those districts inadequate. The tenements were too small to admit an accumulation of capital sufficient for the purposes of improvement; and few leases being granted, the precarious dependence of the tenure prevented every expenditure that was not absolutely necessary for the productiveness of a single year. Some landed

* The destruction of feudal vassalage never could have happened had Scotland retained a separate legislature; because most of the members of that parliament, from vanity, pride, and ambition, would have opposed a measure which reduced them from being petty princes on their own estates, to an equal submission to the laws with their vassals and even poorest tenants.

[Efforts for improving the state of the people.]

proprietors, however, among the vallies of the Grampians exercised a liberal and wise policy in the allotment of their farms, by letting such quantities of land as to admit the full employment of the tenant's skill, and granting leases which stimulated his industry. The beneficial effects which accrued to such judicious landlords, influenced others, and the prospect of agricultural improvement in those districts was favourable. A succession of cold seasons some years before, had damped the spirit of agricultural improvement; but these terminated in 1773,* and were followed by fruitful seasons. In more remote and barren parts of the highlands, during the years of scarcity, extreme indigence prevailed, and the evils were dreadfully aggravated by subordinate oppression.. Though dissolved by law, the feudal system here continued in fact, without the patriarchal sentiments which had rendered the chieftain and his retainers one large family. The proprietors having assigned their lands in large allotments to *tacks-men*, who, both in situation and conduct, bore a striking resemblance to the *middle-men* who are so oppressive to the Irish peasantry, great emigrations took place. For improving the state of the people, the only effectual means of repressing this spirit, attempts were made to stimulate the inhabitants of the coasts to seek from the ocean those riches, which the coldness of the climate and the barrenness of the soil denied to their industrious efforts. Various projects were formed for promoting the fisheries, but hitherto with very partial success. The influence of the union began to extend even to the remote highlands: gentlemen in the army or other professions became conversant with English sentiments and principles, learned a respect for the rights and happiness of their fellow men, and perceived that by encouraging activity and enterprise among their tenants, they would eventually render them more productive. But this spirit was not yet become general; many of the lower proprietors, as well as of the higher class, whose range of observation, thought, and sentiment was narrowed within the circle of their domains, preferred lordly supremacy over humble dependants, to all the benefits accruing to a landlord from an independent cultivator of his lands on the terms of fair reciprocity between man and man. Light and civilization required to

* Here I think it will not be foreign to our purpose to mention a theory which was formed by the peasants of Athol, a district of Perthshire, concerning the severe years, the natural cause of their continuance and termination, as it illustrates the character and notions of our fellow-subjects in an extensive and populous district. Acute and intelligent, with their time not fully occupied by rural business, the highlanders are much addicted to speculation, especially on physical subjects, which make a forcible impression on their senses and observation. The cold seasons that had sterilized their fields were naturally the chief topics of their discourse. Desirous of ascertaining the cause, in the want of facts, like much deeper philosophers, they had recourse to conjecture. The favourite hypothesis was, that Scotland had revolved within the influence of a frozen star, and would become colder and colder as long as this attraction lasted. In the year 1774, the king's astronomer, Mr. Maskelyne, came to that country, with the view of making observations from one of the highest mountains; Shichallion was accordingly chosen. The theorists apprehended his object was to melt the frozen star: the season proved at first extremely rainy, which they imputed to the dissolution of the frost, but it afterwards became warm and genial, which they attributed to the complete success of the experiment. Such was their belief at the time, and long after, as I myself know; and I have heard that among the old it continues to this day.

[Ecclesiastical disputes agitate Scotland.]

be much more perfectly diffused, before the energies of the highlanders were employed to the degree of advantage of which their combined talents, resolution, and enterprise are susceptible.

The lower ranks in Scotland have a greater proportion of knowledge, than corresponding classes in many other countries. One great branch of the study even of peasants and mechanics, (strange to say !) is metaphysical divinity. The equalizing spirit of presbyterianism, in matters of faith pays much less regard to human authority, than is bestowed by the votaries of hierarchical establishments ; and nothing is more common than to find a day labourer contending with the parson of the parish concerning interpretations of scripture and points of orthodoxy. Connected with this anxious care for the doctrines of the church, is a no less vigilant watchfulness for her government. While England was so much occupied by Wilkes and the colonies, Scotland, without being regardless of these, was chiefly agitated by questions concerning the source of clerical appointments. The law of the land established patronage, either of the crown, public bodies, or individuals : a great body in the church, headed by Robertson, supported the continuance of the law as it stood ; a smaller but considerable body in the church, supported by numerous votaries among the people, desired an abolition of the law of patronage ; and until that should be effected, such a modification in its execution as would eventually amount to popular election.* After the re-establishment of the law of patronage in 1712, the clergy found the people extremely averse to the revived mode, which they considered as a remnant of episcopacy, and even of popery ; and many of their own body entertained a similar opinion. It was a maxim in presbyterian government, from John Knox downwards, that a presentee, although perfectly well qualified, and unexceptionable in life and doctrine, was nevertheless inadmissible to his clerical office, till the concurrence of the people who were to be under his ministry, had been regularly ascertained. The form of expressing this concurrence was by the subscription of a paper termed a *call*, and many of the clergy would refuse the lawful presentee, unless he had in his favour this expression of parochial approbation ; thus the mode intended and ordained by the law of the land was transgressed, and the people were gratified by a violation of the statute. During the first years of the present reign this subject was very strongly debated under two views, judicial process in the present circumstances, and the expediency of application for a total repeal of the law. On the first question which came before almost every meeting of the general assembly in some case of appeal, the supporters of *calls* argued from the maxims of presbyterianism and repeated practice, which they endeavoured to establish as usage and common law ; and from the general spirit of liberty. The advocates of patronage argued from the express statute, which every judge is bound to follow, whatever may be his own private or individual maxims or opinions ; and contended that practice never can be pleaded in opposition to positive law. A great majority of the people, as might be naturally expected, adhered to those clergy who proposed to allow such

* See Dr. Hill's paper on this subject, as quoted by Mr. Stewart in his *Life of Robertson*, p. 159, &c., which exhibits a very masterly view of this question, but in more detail than it would suit the purposes of this history to transcribe.

[Literature. Character and writings of Hume.]

weight to popular suffrage, and the clerical opponents of patronage were, as a body, the chief favourites of the multitude. Among them there were many individuals of respectable talents, and some of transcendent abilities;* but the great mass of clerical erudition, and the brightest luminaries of literary genius, were on the side of existing law. Against particular exercises, as well as the general principle of patronage, an outcry was raised, which disturbed Scotland much longer than the Middlesex election agitated England. In 1766, the leaders of the popular party proposed an application to the legislature for the abolition of patronage; but after a very able debate, their motion was rejected. From that time no regular attempt was made to change the law, although on every judicial question within its operation it continued to be reprobated by the votaries of popular election.

Scotland, during this period, was peculiarly distinguished for literary effort. In the preceding year† died David Hume, whose writings must occupy such an important share in a history of the learning of the eighteenth century. As a profound and comprehensive philosopher, Hume had few equals. The powers of his understanding were extraordinary in natural acuteness and strength, and sharpened and invigorated by assiduous exercise; his knowledge was extensive, accurate and multifarious; his faculty of communication was proportioned to his talents and acquisitions; his language is plain, easy, varying with the subject, frequently elegant, and always strong, without any apparent effort. Such intellectual abilities, however, even though accompanied by integrity and benevolence, were not uniformly directed to the real benefit of mankind. With valuable good that accrued from this sage, there was mixed an alloy of evil: His enmity to the religion of his country, was pernicious in proportion to the ingenuity of his sophistry, and the extent of his fame. His *Treatise upon Human Nature*, from false principles, by a subtle system of inferences, endeavoured to establish conclusions contradictory to common sense, and rarely has greater genius been exerted in discovering important and beneficial truths, than are here exercised to impress extravagant absurdities: seldom has MIND more powerfully displayed its energies than in trying to disprove its own existence.‡ Wild and visionary as the system is, yet there are many observations of the highest value: and the author's mode, together with his example, stimulated readers to a degree of intellectual exercise which strengthened their understandings; the examination of false or erroneous subtlety eventually facilitated the attainment of truth. The publication of these notions was moreover of signal service to the science of pneumatology, in the answers which they called forth. Of these the most distinguished were Beattie's *Essay upon Truth*; which in a popular, animated, and impressive manner, expatiated on the wild theories that Hume supported; and Reid's *Inquiry into the Human Mind on the Principles of Common Sense*. By rousing the investigating powers of this very profound philosopher, Mr. Hume has been the means of enlarging man's knowledge of his own faculties. The infidelity of Hume, mischievous as it

* Such as Drs. Erskine and Webster; but, beyond all, Dr. Dick. See Stewart's *Life of Robertson*.

† August, 1776.

‡ See Hume's theory of ideas and impressions, *Treatise of Human Nature*.

[Excellence of his English history.]

is in itself, has incited the friends of religion to add new muniments to the Christian faith. The Essay on Miracles, and the Natural History of Religion, produced from the ability and learning both of Scotland* and England† answers which constitute valuable additions to rational theology; and thus the aberrations of genius, corrected by sound reasoning and wisdom, serve to promote the cause of truth. The impression, however, of the Humean infidelity was by no means effaced: so renowned an author gave a currency to his opinions which they long retained, and at the period before us they were extremely prevalent among youthful men of letters. The moral system of the philosopher, though far less objectionable than his religion, is not without its defects; probably less in the intention of the author, than the interpretation which his principles may admit. Identifying virtue with utility, and not exactly marking the boundaries of that utility which he denominates virtuous, he has misled inferior‡ theorists into very absurd and pernicious conclusions. His scheme, implicitly and indiscriminately adopted, tends to render indefinite expediency, private interest, and state policy, the springs of human conduct, instead of conscience and religion; but though this treatise cannot be admitted, at least by the votaries of revealed or even natural theology, as a just and salutary system of morals, the illustrations and incidental remarks contain a portion of wisdom, which, apart from his other works, would be sufficient to evince the profound ability of the author. The politics of Hume are differently estimated according to the previous opinions which their examiners have formed. One observation is obvious, that though he verges to the notions of the Tories concerning government, he inculcates his doctrines on a very different principle. Far from having recourse to divine right, he only carries his moral doctrine of expediency to affairs of state; and infers, that in the usual course of conduct, it is safer for the individual and society to acquiesce in partial abuses than to attempt correction by force, and this is the whole extent of Hume's Toryism; so that, according to him, compliance or refusal comes to be a mere question of prudence in the existing case.§

Writings contrary to the observation and experience of mankind are rarely lasting. The metaphysical paradoxes of this extraordinary man are not the foundation of his permanent fame; the work which consecrates Hume to immortality is that monument of his genius, which leaving speculative subtlety, descends to be the vehicle of practical wisdom. His history is probably the first composition of that important species which is to be found in ancient or modern times; not less penetrating and profound than Tacitus and Thucydides, he has chosen a subject that admitted of greater extent and variety than either of these illustrious writers; he has exhibited man as progressively advancing from barbarism and ignorance to civilization and knowledge; and in all these situations, employments, and exertions, which develop his intellectual and moral character; the narrative is interesting and deeply engages the reader; the materials are arranged with the clearness of a mind that sur-

* Dr. Campbell.

† Dr. Hurd.

‡ See Godwin's Political Justice, *passim*.

§ Hence Dr. Johnson calls Hume a Tory by accident, and not from principle. See Boswell.

[Robertson. Gibbon. Political economy. Eloquence.]

veyed every part and the whole of its subject ; the civil, ecclesiastical, political, and literary features of the times are exactly and strongly delineated ; throughout this grand production, we perceive the critic of combined taste and science, the philosopher, the politician, the successful investigator and exhibitor of active man. Every friend to christianity must regret that there is, in such an estimable work, a considerable portion of matter which is really inimical to religion, though professedly intended to expose to ridicule, contempt, and censure, some of the superstitions that assumed its name ; but the sceptical impressions that render such strictures dangerous, are only temporary ; whereas the benefit of the illustrious lessons of wisdom will endure as long as the language that conveys them is known, and as judgment exists to appreciate excellence. With the Corypheus of Scottish literature many others were nearly cotemporary. Having founded his fame in the former reign, Robertson, in the present, raised a splendid superstructure ; the historian of Charles V. traced the connexion between ancient and modern man, in the old world ; then winging his flight to the new, he exhibited the spectacle of savage life in a more just and striking form than is elsewhere to be found. On nations in the cradle of society he bestowed a patient investigation and able deduction in exhibiting the wants and character of their infant state ; by unity of design, skilful selection, and masterly execution, he presented an exact, glowing, and interesting picture ; he bestowed on his story and characters almost dramatic animation ; while the impressive description of the poet did not preclude the truth of the historian, or the reflection of the philosopher. In his inquiries into the bodily constitution of the Americans ; the qualities of their minds ; their domestic, civil, and political state and institutions ; their arts, their religion, their manners, and their customs ; he, instead of imputing their character and condition to physical nature, with vigorous sense, and sound philosophy, ascribes them to moral and political causes. The success of Hume and of Robertson stimulated historical adventure in the southern part of the kingdom, and contributed to rouse a writer fitted for transmitting to posterity the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire. The first volumes excited a curiosity and expectation which it required historical powers of the highest kind to gratify in the subsequent efforts. These illustrious writers chose some specific, though grand portion of story, as the subject of their exhibition of human nature. Ferguson presented man under a more general view ; *The Essay on civil Society* traced the species through all the varieties, progression, and declension of the social state ; from the first perceptions of sense to the general conclusions of science ; the earliest operations of sentiment and reason to the heights of moral and political knowledge ; and following barbarity through various stages, conducted it to refinement ; until politeness degenerated into enervation, and effeminate vice destroyed what manly virtue had acquired. Smith unfolded the philosophy of political economy, and promulgated the rules and conduct by which individuals and nations might arrive at opulence, and the various species of productive industry might be exerted with the greatest success. Blair gave to the public the first volume of sermons which decorated christian morality with all the charms of refined taste and polished composition, and by persuasive eloquence impressed beneficial truth. Home introduced the tragic muse

[Encouragement of genius.]

into the Scottish woods, rendered the banks of the Carron as interesting as the shores of the Adriatic, and engaged the heart for sir Malcolm's Matilda as if she had been Priuli's Belvidera. These were among the most distinguished efforts in philosophy, history, and poetry, by which Scotland aspired at literary fame, not unworthy of the partner with whom she was now happily united; whose liberal munificence springing from the energy of freedom, affords to every species of beneficial talents the strongest motives for exertion and display.

CHAPTER XX.

Conduct of France and Spain.—Changing sentiments of the French.—Meeting of parliament.—King's speech declares the necessity of continuing the war.—Debates on the address.—Inquiries into the state of the nation.—Lord Chatham takes an active part in parliament.—Renewal of the law for detaining suspected persons.—Mr. Fox's grand plan of inquiry into the state of the nation—allowed under modifications.—News arrives of Burgoyne's fate.—Different conduct of lord North and lord George Germaine.—Operations of ministers during the recess.—Voluntary contributions for levying new regiments.—Propriety of these discussed in parliament.—Mr. Fox's inquiry into the state of the nation.—Mr. Burke's motion respecting the employment of Indians.—Lord North's plan of negotiation with the colonies.—Commissioners appointed.—Hostile intimation from France.—Mr. Fox's proposed inquiry thereon into the state of the navy.—His inquiry into the plan and preparations of the Canada expedition.—Schism in opposition, on the question of American independence.—Discussion on the subject in the house of peers.—Last efforts of lord Chatham.—His illness, death, and character.—Tributes of respect and gratitude paid to his memory by parliament.—Application to parliament in favour of Ireland.—Consideration postponed.—Repeal of king William's act respecting Roman catholics.—Supplies.—Ways and means, and taxes.—Motion for an inquiry respecting expenditure—rejected.—Dignified speech of his majesty at the close of the nation.

WHILE Britain was engaged in so momentous a contest, her European neighbours anxiously watched operations and events. France and Spain opened their ports to American ships so early as 1776, and treated the colonists in every respect as an independent people. The laws for prohibiting commerce between Britain and her opponents, ultimately punished only Britain herself; precluded from trade with the parent state, the provincials supplied the deficiency from the markets of our rivals. Not contented with reaping the benefit of the new traffic, the great Bourbon kingdoms abetted the revolters in their hostilities; their privateers were openly received, and their prizes publicly sold, in the French and Spanish ports. The French furnished the provincials with artillery and all kinds of warlike stores; their engineers and officers carried skill and discipline to the American armies. Two principles prompted our potent neighbours to assist the revolted colonies; the ancient spirit of rivalry determined the court, and the modern sentiments of liberty instigated the people. The literary efforts in the reign of Louis XIV. had been chiefly employed on works of fancy and taste, or of physical research, but now began to take a different direction, and to investigate theological and political philosophy. It required little penetration to perceive, that both the ecclesiastical and civil establishments of France were extremely defective; that they nourished superstition instead of true religion, and sought the gratification of the court instead of the welfare of the people. Having discovered these imperfections, many now ran into the contrary extreme: Voltaire, D'Alembert, Helvetius, and, above all, Rousseau, gave the tone to fashionable literature: great numbers of

[American mission to France. Franklin.]

the nobility and gentry became deists and republicans; and as the friends of a commonwealth, they were easily induced to favour the revolters from a monarchical government. Mild, gentle, and indolent, if left to himself, the king would have been little inclined to hostilities: but those who had the greatest influence with him were of a very different character: his queen, Marie Antoinette of Austria, having the enterprising spirit of her mother, was desirous of promoting the glory and power of the crown to which she was affianced, and humbling its rival. The duke de Choiseul, always an enemy to the enterprising rival of France, eagerly promoted the cause of the Americans against England. Sartine, the naval minister, hoped that a war with England, when so much of her strength was employed against her late subjects, would attain his favourite object, the exaltation of the French, and the depression of the British navy. These dispositions were promoted by the American ambassadors; first, partially by Messrs. Silas Dean and Arthur Lee, and afterwards more effectually and completely by the illustrious Franklin. Having reached the highest distinctions as a natural philosopher, this sage eclipsed the glory of his physical theories by his political practice; patriotically devoted to his native country, he was warmly attached to the British interest, while he considered it as compatible with the welfare of America. He had sojourned many years in the metropolis, and from his extraordinary talents was connected with able men of all ranks: he strenuously deprecated the measures of government, and uniformly foretold that the consequences would be fatal. Finding the proceedings of administration daily more hostile to the colonies, and that no petitions would be received or regarded, he withdrew, to assist his native land, preparing for war, which he now deemed unavoidable. He encouraged her efforts, increased her resources, and presided in arranging her plans and forming her government. Having employed his inventive genius and profound wisdom in providing the means of internal security to his country, he next undertook to procure her the most useful foreign assistance. Arrived at Paris, Franklin was courted by all ranks as the philosopher, the politician, the enemy of England, and the friend of liberty. He succeeded in determining the court of France to a war apparently pregnant with discomfiture and distress to Britain, but destined eventually to recoil on the aggressor. The state of France was at this time favourable to financial resources: in 1776, M. Neckar being placed at the head of the treasury, by his skill and industry so much reduced the national expenditure, and improved the revenue, that the king saw himself in a condition to encounter England without subjecting his people to new taxes. Great warlike preparations were carried on during the year 1777; but, as the prophetic wisdom of Chatham had foretold, France continued to abstain from actual hostility, until the event of the contest with the colonies should be ascertained. Thoroughly informed of the mighty force which Britain was employing in America, from her experience of British valour and conduct she could not reasonably anticipate the ineffectual result of partial success, or the decisive completion of disaster. The hopes of England, she knew from the late campaign, had been extremely sanguine; but they had in no quarter been fulfilled, and in one had entirely been blasted.

[Parliament. Speech of the king. Debates on the address.]

The calamity of Saratoga finally decided the counsels of France; the moment of humiliation and debasement was chosen by the court of Versailles to give a fatal blow to the formidable power of her rival. Spain was no less favourable to the cause of the Americans: but harassed and fatigued by her wars with the barbarians of Africa, though as prone to hostilities with England as the elder branch of the Bourbons, she was not equally prepared for immediate commencement.

Parliament met the 30th of November; at that time intelligence had not been received of the disastrous fate of Burgoyne's expedition, and the progressive advantages of general Howe, with the force under his command, justified the expectation of much more signal and important successes, than those that were actually attained, when the general, instead of pursuing Washington, closed the campaign in the dissipation of Philadelphia. His majesty's speech spoke hope and confidence. Having afforded his servants the means of victory, the king concluded that they would be employed with effect.* The powers (he said) committed by parliament to the crown had been faithfully exerted; and he trusted, that the conduct and courage of the officers, with the spirit and intrepidity of the soldiers, would be attended with important success. Persuaded that both houses would see the necessity of preparing for such further operations as the contingencies of the war and the obstinacy of the rebels might render expedient, his majesty was for that purpose pursuing the proper measures for keeping the land forces complete to their present establishments; if he should have occasion to increase them, a reliance was placed on the zeal and public spirit of parliament to enable him to make the requisite augmentation. Although repeated assurances were received of the pacific disposition of foreign powers, yet, as the armaments in the ports of France and Spain were continued, he judged it advisable to make a considerable addition to our naval force; it being equally the determined resolution of the king not to disturb the peace of Europe, and to be a faithful guardian of the honour of his crown, and the rights of his people. He informed the commons, that the various services which had been mentioned would unavoidably require large supplies; and assured them that nothing could relieve his mind from the concern which it felt for the burthens imposed on his subjects, but a conviction that they were absolutely necessary for their honour and safety. His majesty was resolved to pursue the measures in which they were now engaged for the re-establishment of constitutional subordination, and still hoped that the deluded multitude would return to their duty. The restoration of peace, order, and confidence, to his American colonies, he would consider as the greatest happiness of his life, and the chief glory of his reign. The addresses, as usual, echoed the speech; and their supporters not only justified the measures of government, but expatiated on the *beneficial consequences* which they had produced, and on the flourishing state of public affairs. The opponents of ministers proposed an amendment, requesting his majesty to adopt some measures to accommodate the differences with America: and recommending a cessation of all hostilities, in order to effectuate so desirable a purpose. We were now, they said, in a much worse situation than when we began the war; fifty

* See state papers, 1777.

[Renewal of the law for detaining suspected persons]

thousand land forces, a hundred ships of war, and thirty millions of increased debt, had not advanced the attainment of our object. Ministers had asserted that we were fighting *for a revenue*, and thus had deluded the country gentlemen and others into an approval of their system : was the accumulation of mortgages the means of meliorating income? The ministerial assertions concerning the prosperity of the nation were totally unfounded in truth. The loss of our American trade was in itself such a diminution of opulence and strength, as must have severely and visibly affected the greatest and wealthiest state that ever existed; but when to this was added the consequent ruin brought on our West India islands, the annihilation of our Mediterranean, African, and Levant commerce, with the failure of our fisheries, arising from the same cause, could our circumstances be justly said to be flourishing? The depreciation of landed estates, the rise of interest, the fall of stocks, and the multiplicity of bankruptcies, were barometers which plainly indicated the commercial and political fall of British prosperity. Were these the documents from which ministers could evince the truth of their position? If such already were the consequences of the contest with our colonies only, what were we to expect when the house of Bourbon contributed its combined strength and resources? Let parliament reflect on the situation to which they had brought the country by their support of ministerial counsels, and change a system so often demonstrated to be pernicious, but of which the mischiefs had far exceeded the predictions of warning wisdom. The earl of Chatham took a very active share in adducing and supporting these arguments : and whereas ministers insisted that both the honour and interest of Great Britain required perseverance, he denied that it was truly honourable to persist in a hopeless undertaking, or advantageous to seek an impracticable object by destructive means. Such was the reasoning by which the celebrated orators and statesmen of opposition simplified and exhibited the state of the country and the conduct of administration, in order to show that, to recover our former greatness, it was necessary to abandon those measures by which our distresses had been incurred. They were, however, unavailing : the proposed amendments were rejected, and the addresses carried by considerable majorities, though not so great as those which had voted with the minister at the commencement of the war. In the house of commons especially, the country gentlemen began to perceive, that the promises of American revenue to relieve them from their burthens, were so far from being realized, that the imposts were rapidly accumulating : they indeed did not vote against ministry, but were very cold in their support.

One of the first acts of the session was a renewal of the law for detaining suspected persons. In discussing this proposition, the opponents of administration contended, that, as its principle was unconstitutional, so its operation had been found to be useless : in fact, no occasion had occurred for carrying it into effect. Ministers argued, that its cause, the American rebellion, still continued, and thereby rendered its renewal necessary ; it had been originally intended less to punish, than to prevent treason. The circumstance

* See parliamentary debates, 1777.

† See speeches of Fox, Burke, and Chatham, with others in the debate.

[Motion of Mr. Fox for an inquiry into the state of the nation.]

from which opposition endeavoured to demonstrate its uselessness, really arose from its preventive efficacy : disaffected men were by the fears of this law restrained from acting according to their dispositions, by abetting and cherishing revolt. The law was renewed. From the debate with which the session commenced to the Christmas recess, the great object of opposition was inquiry into the state of the nation. After several incidental and prelusive debates, the conduct of this momentous question was undertaken by the comprehensive genius of Mr. Fox. The penetrating and expansive understanding of this extraordinary man conceived and proposed a plan adequate to the magnitude of the object. "It was useless (he said) to waste time in vain declamation; let us establish general facts by an accurate induction of particulars. The great question concerning the propriety of perseverance in the American war, depends on the experience which we already possess, and a calculation of the means which remain to the nation for the attainment of this favourite object." The principal premises of his projected investigation he reduced to the following general heads: 1st, the expenses of the war, and the resources which the nation possessed to raise the supplies necessary for its continuance; 2dly, the loss of men from that war; 3dly, the situation of trade, both with respect to America and the foreign markets; 4thly, the present condition of the war, the hopes that might be rightly entertained from its continuance, the conduct and measures of the present administration, the means of obtaining a lasting peace, and our present state with regard to foreign powers; 5thly, what progress the commissioners had made, in consequence of the powers with which they were entrusted for the purpose of bringing about a peace between Great Britain and her colonies. These inquiries would include a great variety of questions, and would demand the production of a multiplicity of documents. If, he said, on fully exploring our situation, it should appear dangerous and disgraceful, and to have arisen from the misconduct of ministers, a new set must be necessarily appointed; but if, on the other hand, the state of the country be flourishing and glorious, as its advantages and splendour are confessedly owing to the present ministers, they must be supported. By inquiry only can it be ascertained what our condition is, and how far their conduct has been wise or foolish. The more complete the communication of documents may be, the more thoroughly can we estimate the merit or demerit of ministers. If they are conscious that their measures are right, they will court discussion: if they are aware they are wrong, they will either oppose a scrutiny, or endeavour to defeat its purpose by garbled or imperfect information. Lord North easily perceived, that such strong reasoning could not be directly controverted; and that, on the other hand, the admission of the proposition in its full extent would be neither expedient nor agreeable to administration; he therefore endeavoured to please both parties. He professed to support Mr. Fox's motion. It would, he said, afford ministers an opportunity of justifying their conduct, and proving the nation to be in a flourishing state: he wished, however, to reserve to himself the right of withholding such papers from the house, as it might be inconvenient, dangerous, or prejudicial to government, to expose. Mr. Fox readily perceived the object and latitude of this discretionary exception, and soon put the real intentions of ministry to the test. A mul-

[Surrender of Burgoyne announced to parliament.]

tiplicity of papers being at his instance produced, he proposed that they should be referred to a committee of the whole house, which should sit two months after that day, on the 2d of February, to afford time for the production of the required papers, lists, and accounts. These propositions being carried, he moved for an address to his majesty, for copies of all the papers relative to steps taken in conformity to the prohibitory act of 1776, for granting peace to those who should submit to the king's authority. The minister saw that the object of this motion was to prove that the prohibitory act had estranged the colonies, as opposition had predicted, instead of conciliating them, as ministers had prophesied. He therefore vehemently opposed the motion, as tending to produce discoveries which would be unwise and prejudicial to the country. Without proving this assertion, he repeated it with such a variety of illustration, as by many members was received for proof; and the papers were withheld. In the house of peers, however, very much to the surprise of both parties in the commons, on a similar motion, the required papers were ordered, without a debate. From this grant of the ministerial lords, of what was refused by their colleagues in the other house, opposition conceived the grounds of their opinions strengthened, respecting the want of concert among the members of administration.

But the arrival of intelligence from America soon presented the state of the nation in a more dismal light, than the sagacity of a Fox, a Burke, or a Chatham, had anticipated. On the 3d of December, despatches were received at the secretary of state's office, announcing the fate of the northern army. Uncertain rumours being spread in the course of the morning, as soon as parliament met the secretary was questioned respecting the intelligence. Rising up slowly from his seat, he, in a low voice and sorrowful accent, acknowledged that general Burgoyne and his army were prisoners of war. For a considerable time after the fatal tidings were delivered, a dead silence overspread the house; shame, consternation, and dismay, from the declared issue of their boasted armaments, did not more closely enchain the tongues of the promoters of the war, than astonishment and grief at so signal a calamity overwhelmed the thoughts, feelings, and utterance of their opponents. The stillness, however, of amazement and grief at length gave way to the loudness of lament and the fury of indignation. All the charges and censures that ever had been or could be adduced, were repeated and accumulated against the authors of a war so unjust in principle, and so inexpedient in policy; against conductors so deficient in wisdom of plan, vigour of execution, and skilful and effectual application of the multifarious resources allowed them by the misplaced confidence of parliament, and the credulity of the country. As ministers, it was said, they displayed gross ignorance, despicable incapacity, and infatuated obstinacy, in all and every part of their measures. After having, by a long and uniform series of mismanagement and folly, brought their country from exaltation to distress, they crowned the mischief of their system by a most dreadful disaster. This ruinous expedition flowed entirely from the same source as the whole of their pernicious system; confidence in false reports and gross exaggeration, which could not once, much less repeatedly and even constantly, have imposed upon understandings in the smallest degree discriminating, unless they had been blinded by

[Different conduct of lords North and Germaine.]

their wishes. The secretary had projected the northern expedition in his closet. Sitting in Westminster, he ventured to direct, not only the general operations, but the particular movements of an army traversing the deserts of America: there were rumours that the inhabitants of Albany would co-operate with the British army, and ministers had formed their Canadian plan, according to their usual practice, on implicit faith in idle reports. A junction, it had been said, was designed between the armies of generals Burgoyne and Howe. To effect this purpose by sea would have been easy, but by land would have occupied a whole campaign: before the armies could have joined, the season for united exertions must have been past. General Howe, instead of co-operating with Burgoyne, was ordered to betake himself to the south; and Burgoyne and his brave soldiers being commanded to advance into the wilds of the enemy's country, had fallen a sacrifice to the ill-advised directions of ministers.

Lord North, in the mildness of his disposition, acknowledged miscarriage, but deprecated blame; his intention had been to promote the honour and interest of his country; he had counselled and acted according to the best of his judgment; he had always been the adviser and promoter of peace, and would gladly relinquish his office, if his resignation could facilitate its honourable attainment. He had been forced into a situation of the highest responsibility by the circumstances of the times and obedience to his sovereign, and had not accepted the appointment from choice. He had found American affairs in a state which he by no means approved; from the dispositions of the Americans, he saw the difficulty, danger, and unproductiveness of taxation, and had therefore proposed and carried a clause of repeal; in his subsequent measures, he had been driven by the force of circumstances, instead of being led by his own deliberate approbation. This gentle reply, which was better calculated to disarm resentment than to confute argument, diminished the asperity of invective, without weakening the efforts of reasoning. Whatever his motives or wishes might be, (said his censurers,) the measures actually proposed by him, and adopted through his ministerial influence with such obstinacy of perseverance, notwithstanding the repeated and uniform warnings that he had received, had in four years brought enormous debt, flagrant disgrace, and direful calamity on his country. If, therefore, his intentions were so pure and faultless as he represented, he incurred a charge of incapacity, which ought immediately to deprive him of his situation.

Lord George Germaine was not so explicit as his colleague: he merely requested the house should suspend its judgment, until the facts were properly examined. He also insinuated that the conduct of the minister and general should undergo a scrutiny, before a just and accurate opinion could be formed. This observation being construed to imply censure against the absent general, revived the flame of rage which the mildness of lord North had cooled; and produced acrimonious violence, with personal retrospections, totally irrelevant to any business before the house.

Earl Chatham frequently attended in parliament this session, which was destined to be his last: he moved, on the 5th of December, that copies of all the orders issued to Burgoyne relative to the northern expedition, should be laid before the house. After pouring out his

[Counsels of ministers during the recess.]

eloquence against the pernicious system, blunders, and miscarriages of ministry, the spirit of delusion, he said, had gone forth; the ministers had imposed on the people, parliament had been induced to sanction the imposition, and false lights had been held out to the country gentlemen; by a promised diminution of tax, they had been seduced to the support of a most destructive war; but the visionary phantom, which had been thus conjured up for the basest deception, was now about to vanish, and the conduct of ministers ought to be probed. His lordship's motion, eloquently and forcibly as it was supported, was carried in the negative. On the 10th of December, Mr. Wilkes proposed a repeal of the obnoxious laws. Opposition gave him little support; it was now, they conceived, too late to expect conciliation from such a tardy concession, and measures must be adopted more seasonable in the existing circumstances. On the 11th of December, an adjournment to the 20th of January was moved and carried, contrary to the strenuous remonstrances of opposition, who, in a situation of such emergency, were extremely inimical to so early and long a recess: and ministers employed this interval in forming and arranging measures adapted to the present reverse of fortune.

The loss of the northern army appeared to have entirely counteracted the schemes of administration for subjugating America. The advantages obtained under general Howe were far from being decisive; he had taken towns, but had not conquered the enemy's troops. No additional force: could he expected from the German princes, and it would be with difficulty that their corps in our service would be recruited to their full complement. The bad success which had already attended our efforts, was very inimical to the increase, or even separation, of our armies from our own country. These actual difficulties were enhanced by expected dangers; the conduct of the house of Bourbon was so openly, and, indeed, so glaringly adverse to Britain, that war appeared probable, if not certain. In such circumstances, many, not inimical to ministers, conceived, that perseverance in our attempts would be insatuated obstinacy, instead of magnanimous firmness, and expected that they would desist from such a hopeless enterprise; but these expectations were totally disappointed; it was resolved to persist in the system of compulsion. Lord North was desirous of offering some terms of conciliation; but he agreed with his colleagues, that if these did not produce the intended effect, it was incumbent on Britain to persist in her plans of force. And if this determination be not altogether consonant to political wisdom, it was perfectly conformable to the general series of ministerial conduct. From a review of the measures and proceedings for the last four years, it is evident that they had not considered the great subject of their thoughts and policy so comprehensively and acutely, as to examine, compare, and estimate the value of the object, with the trouble, expense, and danger of the means, but narrowed their thoughts to the probability of success. Continuing this imperfect and partial mode of appreciation, they still entertained hopes that they might ultimately prevail. The force which they had furnished was, they alleged, sufficient for the object, if it had been properly employed. Much more effectual advances might have been made by an army so powerful, and so well supplied, against such an inferior enemy. By wise and judicious efforts, the British army, if properly recruited and

[Voluntary levies of new regiments.]

repaired, must be victorious ; but, although the necessity of raising a considerable body of new troops was, on this ground of policy, sufficiently evident, the means were not so obvious. The late misfortune, and the little apparent room for hope, which now remained, of bettering our condition by force, allowed no encouragement for an application to parliament ; the ministers, therefore, had recourse to the persons and classes who had shown the greatest eagerness in the prosecution of the American war, and professed to afford them an opportunity of testifying their peculiar attachment and loyalty to the crown. They proposed, that individuals and corporations should raise regiments, and being allowed the bounty money given by government in the time of peace, should defray the recruiting expenses beyond that sum ; in return for which, the contracting parties should have the appointment of the officers, who, it was not doubted, would willingly undertake to levy a number proportioned to their respective commissions ; such a quota of men would make up the requisite supply. In the former war, Mr. Pitt had experienced many important advantages from Scotch highlanders. Actuated by a mistaken zeal, these courageous, hardy, and enterprising mountaineers had twice struck terror into the bravest British veterans, and the most populous parts of England ; but had shown, in Flanders, Germany, and America, that, when properly instructed and guided, they could fight as well for their king and country, as, when misinformed and misled, they had fought against our constitutional law and government. Part of the present plan was, to bring great bodies of highlanders into his majesty's service. Of a migratory and adventurous disposition, and, in those days of unimproved agriculture, possessing scanty means of livelihood, those men were much more inclined to the military profession, than people in richer countries, and of stationary habits. Besides, there had been a succession of cold and withering seasons, which had greatly diminished their usual resources from pasturage. Distress combined with courage and the spirit of adventure to dispose them to be soldiers. In addition to these motives, another principle was addressed ; the attachment of the peasantry to the chieftains, so prevalent in all feudal countries ; and which, in the highlands, combined patriarchal with seigniorial relations. The noblemen, and other chiefs of the greatest power and influence, undertook to raise regiments. From the north, the Mackenzies brought two thousand, and the Gordons one ; from the northwest and the isles, the Macdonalds brought one thousand ; from the west, the duke of Argyll two thousand ; from the southwest, the duke of Hamilton one thousand ; and from the southern frontiers of the highlands, the duke of Athol one thousand. To this powerful support from the landed proprietors, commercial wealth added its efforts : the city of Edinburgh raised a regiment equally numerous and well appointed as the others : nor was Glasgow, though she had suffered very much from the American contest, behind her eastern neighbour. In England, Manchester and Liverpool preceded other mercantile towns, in performing the same service. But, in order to render the efforts of monied opulence generally employed and extensively beneficial, it was ardently wished, though not so sanguinely hoped, that London would take the lead ; the city and corporation were not, indeed, so violently inimical to the court, as they had been some years before ; of the

[Discussion of the voluntary levies in parliament.]

popular leaders, some were dead, and others had, from various causes, lost much of their former influence. The general sentiment was not so completely changed as to give ministers a majority in the municipal councils of the metropolis: sir James Esdaile, the lord mayor, was friendly to administration; but his authority was not sufficiently great to determine the livery; and his motion for corporate efforts to recruit his majesty's forces was negatived. A private association, however, was formed, to collect the contributions of individuals, and considerable sums were raised. The same mode was adopted at Bristol, with proportionate effect. In various parts of England similar attempts were made, but with trifling success: the great source of contribution, confidence in the ministers that were to dispose of the product, appeared to be most frequently wanting. The troops levied in this manner amounted to about fifteen thousand men, ten thousand of whom were raised in Scotland.

When parliament assembled after the recess, the contributions by individuals or bodies, for repairing the exhausted army, were represented by opposition as illegal and unconstitutional; illegal, because men and money had been raised without consent of parliament; unconstitutional, because such levies were indefinite as to number, and might be employed to deprive the country of its liberties. The law lords, and commoners connected with administration, argued, that the king, by his prerogative, was empowered to levy men, and to raise an army. When the new levies were reported to parliament, it was the duty of that body, if they approved of the measure, to provide for their subsistence: if otherwise, to refuse a supply, which in effect would disband the troops. The money raised was offered by individuals and bodies, who had a right to present their own money to the king as well as to any other person. Voluntary contributions of either men or money, or both, had been frequently offered in times of emergency; as for instance, in the rebellion of 1745, and the beginning of the seven years war, which were highly approved by men most distinguished for attachment to the constitution; in the former of these eras, by the lord-chancellor Hardwicke; and the latter, by Mr. secretary Pitt. That the offers of individuals, in times of national difficulty, to contribute their utmost efforts, either by men or money, to the extrication of their country, were not laudable, and ought not to be received, opposition leaders were too able to affirm: without discussing the general principle, they endeavoured to prove, that the cases were totally different; and that the only means of relief from our present calamities was, to abandon coercive measures, and withdraw our troops from America. But, if the augmentation was at all necessary, it should have been effected by filling up the old regiments to their full complement; which would be both more conducive to military discipline, by attaching new recruits to veterans; and more economical, by saving immediately the pay, and ultimately the half-pay of the officers. The mode now adopted, raised many gentlemen of no experience, to appointments fit only for veteran officers. The distribution of military trust bore much more the appearance of ministerial jobs to increase their patronage, than the policy of statesmen to strengthen the national force. These objections being canvassed by the supporters of administration, the question was proposed for

[Speech of Mr. Fox on the expediency of terminating the war.]

granting the sums that were required for the new troops, and carried in the affirmative.

The time appointed for inquiring into the state of the nation now drawing near, various motions were made for the presentment of papers; especially the instructions given to the generals in America; the correspondence that had passed between the commanders respectively; and also for accounts of the troops, artillery, and stores, which were in the various parts of America in the beginning of 1774, or sent thither since that time. The papers required, were either not produced at all, or so imperfectly, as to withhold in a great degree the desired information. From the materials, however, incomplete as they were, Mr. Fox attempted to establish one great proposition: not only the expediency, but the absolute necessity, of bringing the American war to the speediest possible conclusion; and of restoring harmony, upon a broad and equitable foundation, between the mother country and her colonies. He comprehended and exhibited in one view, the whole series of ministerial counsels; the detail of means, and the particulars and amount of the result; ministers, he argued, and the majority in parliament, had preferred coercive to conciliatory measures; in consequence of that preference, Britain had gone to war with America; that war had lasted a certain number of years, had been prosecuted with a specified force by sea and land, attended with a stated expense of money and lives, and our utmost efforts in three years had not produced any material advantage. The army of Britain, in the course of hostilities, had been much more numerous and strong, and the army of the enemy less numerous and weaker, than they were at present: it was nearly impossible to place our troops in America on the same relative footing to the forces of the colonies, with these which had already failed; and, after the repeated and continued failure of a very great force, we could not, consistently with probability and common sense, succeed with a much smaller. He enumerated the details of expense incurred by the war, stated the resources of the country, and denied that the nation could support* the continuance, much less the increase of expense, which perseverance in coercion would demand: repeating, in detail, the various political measures of government, from the Boston port bill downwards, he contended, that they had so much alienated the minds of the Americans, that a much greater army would have been necessary to reduce them to submission than Britain had sent, or could send. Ministers had not assisted force by policy: negotiations, it is true, had been tried, but the obnoxious laws, rejection of petitions, and the very overtures themselves, had rendered them unavailing. From this chain of positions he inferred, that it would be impossible to reduce America by arms; and our situation respecting France made it necessary to employ a strong force for the security of our own country, and of our garrisons in Europe. He moved, therefore, that the committee should

* An impartial reader may probably disapprove of Mr. Fox's circumscription of the possible resources of his country: as, in the first place, erroneous in point of fact, since they were soon found equal to much greater expenditure; and, secondly, not proper to be publicly declared. Disagreement of opinion, however, concerning the general extent, is perfectly compatible with the most exact coincidence of judgment, concerning the impolicy of employing any part of them in an attempt to subjugate America, after the disaster at Saratoga.

[Mr. Burke's motion on the employment of Indians.]

address his majesty, that no part of the old established national forces in these kingdoms, or in the garrisons of Gibraltar or Minorca, should be sent to America. To the great surprise of the public, no answer was made either to the speech or motion; the question being called for without a debate, Mr. Fox's proposition was rejected by a majority of two hundred and fifty-nine to one hundred and sixty five.

From the silence of ministers, it was conceived that a new scheme was in agitation respecting America, which determined them to abstain from that subject, until they should be ready to lay their plans before parliament. While the public was anxiously expecting the result of ministerial deliberations, Mr. Fox proposed, and explained to the committee on the state of the nation, twelve motions, framed agreeably to the principles and outlines which he had already stated and drawn. Their object was, to particularize the force employed, the numbers lost, the sums expended, and progress made; and to establish, as a general position, that, in every view of this improvident and destructive war, they should bear constantly in mind, that, besides our having suffered such disgraces in its progress as this country never before experienced, all those thousands of lives, and millions of money, had not only been thrown away to no manner of purpose, but that, on the contrary, the vast expense of blood and treasure had rendered conciliation much more difficult, and consequently our situation as a nation infinitely worse, than if the sword had never been drawn. Ministers objected to the several motions, as tending to disclose our situation to the enemy, and being in other respects hurtful to the country. Resolutions of a similar import were moved in the house of peers by the duke of Richmond, and experienced the same fate.

In reviewing the conduct of the war, Mr Burke moved an inquiry into the employment of the Indians. Detailing the horrid massacres of these savages with all his animation and force of description, he contended, that the infliction of individual pain, more than the political annoyance of their enemies, was their object; and thence argued, that their mode of hostility was not conducive to the purposes of civilized nations engaged in a war; these not being torment, but reduction and pacification. Nothing but necessity could excuse the employment of such savage warriors; the reasons that were in force in the war between the French and English, did not now exist. The Indian tribes had formerly been powerful states, relatively to the European settlers; it was then necessary to cultivate amity with them, in order to prevent their murderous incursions; but now their numbers were reduced, and there remained no motive or reason for seeking their alliance. To the purposes of conquest or coercion, they were totally inefficacious; their employers might, through them, obtain partial butchery, but could derive no important advantage: on the appearance of danger, they would immediately desert every other commander, as they had abandoned Burgoyne. The employment of the savages was also farther objectionable as a measure of economy, one Indian soldier cost as much as five of the best regular troops; even, therefore, were their mode of warfare unexceptionable in other respects, the service did not nearly repay the expense. It was said by ministers, that if we had not employed the Indians, the Americans would have employed them against us; but there was no proof that they ever entertained any such intention; and if they had, the cruelty

[Lord North's plan of negotiation with the colonies.]

would not have been so destructive against regular embodied soldiers, who could so easily repel those undisciplined murderers, as against scattered and defenceless women and children. The attempt also to incite an insurrection of the negro slaves in the southern colonies, he reprobated, as equally barbarous and impolitic, as farther irritating the Americans by the attempt, and being in the execution ineffectual; and the motion, after a long debate, was negatived.

Lord North had frequently afforded ground for an opinion that he was by no means so eager for coercive measures, as some of his colleagues. He had made several attempts to produce conciliatory plans, and had shown himself not indisposed to concession, until he was recalled by his coadjutors to the coercive tone of the court.* Although, in compliance with the more obstinate and imperious members of the cabinet, he expressed a determination to persevere in the attempt, agreeably to his own disposition as well as to the policy which his judgment approved, he once more made a conciliatory essay, and on the 17th of February, 1778, he proposed to the house of commons a plan for that purpose. He repeated his uniform conviction of the inefficiency of American taxation as a measure of finance; and thereby virtually, though not expressly, acknowledged the false reasoning of those colleagues or supporters who proposed by war with America to increase our revenue. He had wished to keep the discussion of taxation as a right as much as possible out of parliament, being convinced that its exercise would neither be productive nor expedient. Circumstances and events had forced the subject upon the legislature, and the uncomplying conduct of the colonists had rendered war unavoidable. The success of the hostilities had been totally different from what the country had reason to expect, from the great, well appointed, and amply provided force, which had been furnished by government. In the whole course of the last campaign, sir William Howe, in the number and goodness of his troops, and all manner of supplies, had been hitherto much superior to the army of Washington. General Burgoyne, until the disaster of Bennington, was nearly twice as strong as Gates. The issue of this expedition was totally different from the expectations that were reasonably formed; but to events, and not to hopes, their plans must be adapted. He moved to bring in two bills, one to declare the intentions of parliament concerning the exercise of the right of taxing America; and another, to enable his majesty to appoint commissioners for quieting the disorders now subsisting in the colonies. Five commissioners were to be appointed, any three of whom were empowered to treat with the congress, or any other assembly of men, and even with individuals in America, concerning grievances existing in the government of the colonies, or in the laws of Great Britain that extended to them; and contributions, or any other regulations which might be for the common good of both countries; with a proviso, however, that such agreements should not be binding until ratified by parliament. The commissioners were to be invested with absolute power for proclaiming a cessation of hostilities by sea and land, opening an intercourse with the mother country, suspending the operation of all acts of parliament relating to the

* See this volume, chap. xiv. and *passim*.

[Reception of the plan by parliament—passed with amendments.]

North American colonies passed since the 10th of February, 1763, and granting pardons to every description of persons.

In viewing these propositions of lord North, one remark is very obvious: if the measure now offered was right, it ought to have been adopted sooner; either the minister evinced want of knowledge and wisdom in incurring the danger and expense of war without an adequate object; or want of firmness and perseverance in too readily succumbing under misfortune. To wise and magnanimous nations, the hour of distress is not the hour of submission; and the present offers, after the threats and denunciations of ministers, were very naturally and fairly construed to be the concessions of discomfited boasting. Very mortifying it was to the feeling of every patriotic Briton, that his country, which had so often dictated to the most powerful nations of Europe, and had lately, under the auspices of Pitt acquired such greatness and glory, was now so far changed and humiliated as to be the solicitor of peace from her recent subjects: galling, indeed, these reflections were to the generous pride of patriotism; it was, however, the province of wisdom to attend less to feeling than to real interest. If it be the highest office of prudence to avoid, in any material case, error of judgment conducive to prejudicial conduct, its employment next in importance is recantation and reform. Dearly purchased experience had taught us, that coercion would not succeed, at least without sacrifices greater than the value of the object; conciliation was therefore expedient. But the proposed system bore the general character of its author, wishing to please all parties, and satisfying none; defeating the purposes of benevolent disposition and acute understanding, by the want of firmness of temper. It was stamped with the same mixture of natural conciliation and adventitious coercion, the same imperfectness of comprehension, which, in the commencing act of its ministry, after proposing the repeal of the other obnoxious duties, reserved the three-penny tax upon tea.

The speech with which his lordship introduced his plan, and the propositions themselves, were heard with profound attention, but without marks of approbation from any party, class, or individual in the house. The minister declared, that his present sentiments were those which he had always entertained, and an accurate and minute examiner of his conduct and character could discover, that the change here supposed was perfectly conformable to the uniform tenor of his indecision and fluctuation. But the greater number of his hearers had attended to acts, rather than to the mind and circumstances in which they originated, and though surprised at his plan, wondered much more at the declarations by which it was prefaced. He had been considered by parliament, and represented to the nation, as the person the most tenacious of those rights which he was now willing to resign, and the most averse from that submission which he now proposed to offer. The minister received the earliest support from those who had most vigorously combated his preceding measures, but expressed their fears that the concessions were too late, and that they had waited till France had probably completed a treaty with the American provinces; they would, however, vote for any scheme that tended to reconciliation. The principal bill underwent various animadversions from the usual supporters of the minister. After several material corrections and modifications, it passed in both houses without

[Hostile intimations from France.]

a division. After its amendments being expressed, the new bill was as follows: "An act for removing all doubts and apprehensions concerning taxation by the parliament of Great Britain, in any of the colonies, provinces, and plantations in North America and the West Indies; and for repealing so much of an act made in the seventh year of the reign of his present majesty, as imposes a duty on tea imported from Great Britain into any colony or plantation in America, or relates thereto." The second bill, which was a corollary from the first, passed with little opposition. The commissioners were, the commander in chief, lord Howe, the earl of Carlisle, William Eden, esq. and governor Johnstone. The able and learned Adam Fergusson was secretary to the mission.

In the beginning of March, the duke of Grafton informed the peers that he had received well attested intelligence, that a treaty was concluded and actually signed between France and America; and demanded from ministers, either an acknowledgment, or denial, of this important act. Lord Weymouth, secretary of state for the southern department, protested that he had heard no account of such alliance being formed, or even intended: but within a week after this declaration, a message was delivered to each house by the respective ministers, to the following effect: "His majesty having been informed, by order of the French king, that a treaty of amity and commerce has been signed between the court of France and certain persons employed by his majesty's revolted subjects in North America, has judged it necessary to direct, that a copy of the avowal delivered by the French ambassador to lord viscount Weymouth be laid before parliament: and at the same time to acquaint them, that his majesty has thought proper, in consequence of this offensive communication on the part of France, to send orders to his minister to withdraw from that court: his majesty is persuaded, that the justice and good faith of his conduct towards foreign powers, and the sincerity of his wishes to preserve the tranquillity of Europe, will be acknowledged by all the world; and his majesty trusts that he shall not stand responsible for the disturbance of tranquillity, if he should find himself called upon to resent so unprovoked and so unjust an aggression on the honour of his crown, and the essential interests of his kingdom, contrary to the most solemn assurances, subversive of the law of nations, and injurious to the rights of every sovereign power in Europe. His majesty, relying with the firmest confidence on the zealous and affectionate support of his faithful people, is determined to be prepared to exert all the force and resources of his kingdoms, which he trusts will be found adequate to repel every insult and attack; and to maintain and uphold the power and reputation of his country." The minister moved an address to the throne, which, besides conforming to the principal positions of the message, declared the strongest indignation and resentment at the unjust and unprovoked conduct of France, arising from that restless and dangerous spirit of ambition and aggrandizement which had so often invaded the rights and threatened the liberties of Europe. It concluded with the strongest assurances of the most zealous assistance and support, and declared the firmest confidence that the whole nation would contribute every possible exertion for the honor and dignity of the crown, and the just rights and essential interests of these kingdoms.

[Proposition for the removal of ministers.]

In the house of commons an amendment was proposed, that his majesty should remove from his councils those ministers, in whom, from experience of the pernicious effects of their past measures, his people could place no confidence in the present momentous situation of public affairs. The chief arguments for the amendment were, that it would be extremely foolish, and no less dangerous, to confide the management of the most arduous war in which Britain had ever engaged, to ministers whose conduct had been a series of ignorance, rashness, and weakness, and had already brought the country, from a high pitch of power and glory, to its present humiliation and distress; who, having found the kingdom in peace, by their counsels and measures had changed that state of happiness and prosperity into all the horrors and mischiefs of an unnatural, cruel, and destructive civil war: and whose ignorance and obstinacy, disdaining all warning, had plunged this nation into all its present danger and calamity.*

There could not be a more glaring or criminal instance of ministerial negligence and imbecility, than that, in times of peace, they could not discover the designs and transactions of France, until they were openly avowed. Ministers had shown themselves totally unfit for managing our affairs; therefore they ought not to be trusted with the conduct of greater and more difficult situations. The enemy presumed on the notorious weakness and instability which had long characterized the British counsels. They knew, that if the ministers had been pensioners of France they could not have promoted the interests of that country more effectually, than they had actually done. It would be useless to offer any support to his majesty, without informing him at the same time of the incapacity of those to whom he had intrusted the management of public affairs. After such repeated instances of folly, neglect, and incapacity, the nation could repose no confidence in his present ministers; and their removal alone could realize any offers of support, and revive the drooping spirit of the people. That single measure would strike more terror into the enemies of this country, than all the warlike preparations which we were capable of making under the present notorious imbecility of our councils and conduct. Against these arguments the minister and his friends did not offer refutations equally strong; but they contented themselves with asserting their conduct to have been unblamable, and the best which the state of affairs could possibly admit; and repeated their asseverations, of the flourishing state of the country, and its ability to defend itself, and inflict punishment on our enemies for their unprovoked attack. The course of the debate brought forward the question of American independence, and manifested that diversity of opinion on the subject between certain members of opposition which had before begun to discover itself, and eventually rendered them distinct and even opposite parties. By a part of opposition, the immediate acknowledgment of the independence of America was considered not only as the wisest, but the only measure which could extricate us from the present evils, without still greater losses, and with any probable prospect of deriving future advantage from our colonies. This was the opinion held by the duke of Richmond, the marquis of Rockingham, Messrs. Burke, Fox, and other members of that party;

* Parliamentary reports.

[Proposed inquiries of Mr. Fox into the state of the navy, etc.]

but the earls Chatham, Temple, and Shelburne, and lord Camden, Messrs. Dunning and Barré, with some other members of both houses, were totally averse from the independence of America. Such a concession they considered as the greatest of all political and national evils, and as including the utter degradation and final ruin of Britain. The other division of opposition admitted the evils to be great, but not equal to those which must be incurred in endeavouring to prevent its completion, and thought that no effort for that purpose would be ultimately successful.

After the hostile declaration of France, the inquiry into the state of the nation was principally directed to the condition of the navy. On the 11th of March, Mr. Fox having taken a view of our naval force in the various harbours of this country and the different stations abroad, as the result of the whole proposed a motion, importing that the public had paid, in the last eight years, for the ordinaries and extraordinaries of the navy, though the greater part of that period was free from hostilities, about double the sum to which the estimates for the same service amounted in the eight years commencing with 1755 and ending with 1762, which included the whole of the late war; and that, notwithstanding the immense increase of cost, the present naval force of Great Britain and Ireland was inadequate to the very dangerous crisis of public affairs. Ministers neither endeavoured to confute the assertions, nor to overturn the arguments, of their formidable adversary: the force which they could not combat, they endeavoured to elude; the motion, they said, was impolitic, as it tended to expose to the enemy the state and disposition of our maritime strength; and by this common objection, they prevailed on parliament to stifle inquiry.

The great statesman of opposition having failed in his endeavour to investigate the future efficiency of our fleets, was not deterred from prosecuting his inquiries, which he now turned to the past direction and conduct of our armies, and on the 19th of March he proposed to the committee the consideration of the Canada expedition. He undertook to demonstrate that the plan was impolitic, unwise, and incapable of producing any good effect; that the provision made for it was inadequate to the object, and that general Burgoyne had acted agreeably to the tenor of his instructions: if he established these three positions, (he said,) he would deduce from them a motion concerning the conduct of lord George Germaine. The ministers opposed the inquiry chiefly for the same reason that they had resisted a former attempt of a similar tendency, the absence of one of the parties; they, however, entered more into the actual merits of the plan than on the preceding occasion, and endeavoured to prove that the northern expedition was, in the first place, a wise and necessary measure; that it was capable of success, and the design evidently practicable; and that the noble secretary, in whose department it lay, had omitted nothing which could be done by an attentive minister to insure its success. Although they did not fully enter upon this justification, yet they brought forward that which they appeared to consider as their principal ground of defence. The question being at length called for, the first resolution was rejected by the majority of 164 to 44. Mr. Fox, enraged and indignant at the event of this division, not only declared that he would not propose another motion; but, taking the resolution

[Schism of opposition on the question of American independence.]

of censure out of his pocket, tore it into pieces, and immediately quitted the house.

The duke of Richmond early in this session moved and procured a grand committee to inquire into the state of the nation; and having been very active in forwarding its investigations, on the 7th of April he took a general view of the progress and result. It had not produced, in every case, he said, the desired information, but the effects on the whole had been important and beneficial; they had ascertained the state of the army and navy, and the vast expenditure which accrued from the American war. Ministers, it was true, had used their utmost efforts to prevent parliament from being informed: but, in opposing the resolutions as unseasonable, they had fully admitted the facts on the allegation of which they were grounded. They were far from pretending that the asserted deficiencies of the army and navy were unfounded; they objected not to the truth of the statement, but to the policy of the publication. Viewing the state of the resources made known through the exertions of the committee, he proposed to finish the inquiry by an address to the throne, which should exhibit an abstract of the information obtained, the resolutions proposed, and the general inferences which sprung from the whole.

Founded upon these bases, the projected address represented to his majesty **THE STATE OF HIS DOMINIONS**; and expressed the indignation of the house against the conduct of ministers, by which it was caused. In this calamitous, though he trusted not desperate, situation of public affairs, they reposed their ultimate hope in his majesty's paternal goodness. It reminded the king of the constitutional principles, whence issued the revolution, and the accession of his illustrious house; and the great and increasing prosperity of the country while its government adhered to these principles. It recalled to his majesty's recollection **THE PROSPEROUS AND GLORIOUS STATE IN WHICH HE FOUND THESE REALMS**; contrasted the condition of that time with the *present distress*, and declared a confidence that the wisdom and goodness of the sovereign would put an end to that system under which so fatal a reverse had taken place. This was the substance of the duke of Richmond's address, interspersed through which was poignant asperity against his majesty's court and administration. While proposing remedies for the alleged evils, he insisted that the only sure means of extrication from a war with the colonies, was the recognition of their unqualified independence. This was a proposition, to which not only lord North, but the most firmly and violently and ardent supporter of coercive measures was not more inimical than the illustrious champion of conciliation, the earl of Chatham. His lordship had that season frequently attended the house of peers, less from the relaxation of distemper than from the calls of duty, which the increasing calamities of his country made him consider as every day more imperious. In a bodily state fitted only for the stillness and quiet of a bed of sickness, he encountered the active warfare of the senate, hoping his counsels might at length be admitted by those who were experiencing such evils from former rejection and intractability, and that, in his old age, he might contribute to restore part of the prosperity, greatness, and glory, which he had acquired for his country in the vigour of his life, and which left her when he ceased to guide her affairs. His exertions, in the former part

[Last efforts of lord Chatham.]

of the session, so much beyond his bodily strength, had increased his distemper; but, informed of the business that was to be agitated, and aware of the doctrines which would be brought forward, he thought it incumbent on himself to render it manifest to the world, that though he agreed with the marquis of Rockingham and his adherents in reprobating the system of ministry, he totally differed from them on the question of American independence. He accordingly betook himself to the senate, of which, for near half a century, he had been the brightest luminary. Having arrived in the house, he refreshed himself in the lord-chancellor's room, until he learned that business was about to begin. The infirm statesman was led into the house of peers, attended by his son-in-law, lord Mahon, and resting on the arm of his second son, Mr. William Pitt. He was richly dressed in a superb suit of black velvet, with a full wig, and covered up to the knees in flannel. He was pale and emaciated, but the darting quickness, force, and animation of his eyes, and the expression of his whole countenance, showed that his mind *retained* its primeval perspicacity, brilliancy and strength. The lords stood up, and made a lane for him to pass through to the bench of the earls, and with the gracefulness of deportment for which he was so eminently distinguished, he bowed to them as he proceeded. Having taken his seat, he listened with the most profound attention to the speech of the duke of Richmond. When his grace had finished, lord Chatham rose: he lamented that, at so important a crisis, his bodily infirmities had interfered so often with his regular attendance on his duty in parliament. "I have this day (said he) made an effort beyond the powers of my constitution, to come down to the house, perhaps the last time I shall enter its walls, to express my indignation against the proposition of yielding the sovereignty of America. My lord, I rejoice that the grave has not closed upon me, that I am still alive to lift up my voice against the dismemberment of this ancient and noble monarchy. Pressed down as I am by the load of infirmity, I am little able to assist my country in this most perilous conjuncture; but, my lords, while I have sense and memory, I never will consent to tarnish the lustre of this nation by an ignominious surrender of its rights and fairest possessions. Shall a people so lately the terror of the world, now fall prostrate before the house of Bourbon? It is impossible. I am not, I confess, well informed of the resources of this kingdom; but I trust it has still sufficient to maintain its just rights, though I know them not; and any state, my lords, is better than despair. Let us at least make one effort; and, if we must fall, let us fall like men."

The duke of Richmond declared his grief and horror at the dismemberment of the empire to be as great as that of any man in the house or nation, but how was it to be avoided? he himself was totally ignorant of the means of resisting with success the combination of America with France and Spain. He did not know how to preserve the dependence of America. If any person could prevent such an evil, lord Chatham was the man; but what were the means that great statesman would propose? Lord Chatham, agitated by this appeal, made an eager effort at its conclusion to rise; but before he could utter a word, pressing his hand to his heart, he fell down in a convulsive fit. The duke of Cumberland and lord Temple, who were nearest him, caught him in their arms. The house was immediately in

[His death and character.]

commotion, strangers were ordered to depart, and the house was adjourned. Lord Chatham being carried into an adjoining apartment, medical assistance soon arrived. Recovering in some degree, he was conveyed in a litter to his villa at Hayes in Kent, and there he lingered till the 11th of May, when he breathed his last, in the seventieth year of his age.

Thus died William Pitt, earl of Chatham; his death being hastened by his efforts to save his country, whose interest and glory it had been the business of his life to promote. Many as are the examples of uncommon ability which English history presents, she has none to record more brilliant, more forcible, or more beneficial to the times in which it operated. Surpassing other senators in glowing, energetic, and commanding eloquence, he still farther exceeded them in political wisdom; astonishing parliament as an orator, he astonished the nation and all mankind as a statesman. Rarely have been united in the same person, such powers of thought, speech, and action. Grasping the principles, circumstances, and relations to be considered and discussed, he instantaneously perceived the arguments to be adduced in deliberation, or the means to be employed in conduct. Sagacious to discover, rapid and powerful to invent and combine, luminous and strong to explain and impress, he was decisive and prompt in execution. He not only discerned and chose effectual means, but applied them at the instant of time which was most favourable to their efficacy. Thoroughly master of the human character, he perfectly comprehended the general and peculiar talents and qualities of all, with whom either accident, inclination, or duty induced him to converse. Hence he selected the fittest instruments for executing, in the manifold departments of public service, his wise, bold, and sublime plans. Not his intellectual powers only, but the estimation resulting from these, in union with his moral conduct, gave to Mr. Pitt an authority far transcending that of other ministers: inaccessible to avarice, unseparated by pleasure and luxury, the abstinence of his dispositions, and the temperance of his habits, confirmed that confidence which his wisdom and magnanimity created: destined for the army, he did not receive an academic education. The ground-work of erudition was indeed laid in classical knowledge;* but the superstructure was left to himself. His studies were ethics, poetry, eloquence, history, and politics; especially the history and politics of his country. Thus he was, in a great measure, self taught. His genius, though extraordinary in force and fertility, and enriched with ample materials, not being disciplined in proportion to its capacity and knowledge, did not habitually exert itself in close deduction;† but, for grandeur of con-

* At Eton, where he was the cotemporary and friend of Lyttelton and Fielding.

† Reasoning does not merely depend upon power, but on power confirmed and facilitated by habit. Every able man is not necessarily a habitual logician: nor is every age and country which exhibits works of great ability, necessarily eminent for ratiocinative efforts. In the reign of George the second, close argument was not the principal characteristic of our senatorial oratory; brilliant and powerful images to charm the fancy, pathetic descriptions and exhibitions to impress the feelings, aided by graceful elocution and delivery to strike the senses, were much more prominent in the most approved models, than an unbroken chain of antecedents and consequents merely conducting truth to the understanding. Thus the state of the senate encouraged that mode of eloquence which the early studies and pursuits of Mr. Pitt tended to bestow.

[Flourishing state of Britain under his administration.]

ception and comprehensiveness of views, force of reasoning, depth of conclusion, and sagacity of prediction; strength and sublimity of imagery, and appositeness of allusion; for pathetic in every kind and variety; for wielding at will the judgment, fancies, and passions of his hearers, William Pitt stood unrivalled. But his wisdom, magnanimity, and energy, are most clearly beheld in their effects. At the beginning of the seven years war, the nation, perceiving their country neglected by ministers, her arms discomfited and inglorious, and her spirits drooping and desponding, called on Mr. Pitt for relief. Unsupported by court interest, obnoxious to the confederacy which had long prevailed, his genius overpowered intrigue. He came to the highest office, when none else by holding it could save the state. Having risen exclusively by ability himself, his chief object was to bring every kind of ability into action which could be beneficial to the country. Disdaining to govern by parties, he absorbed them all into his own vortex. From torpidity, weakness, defeat, disgrace, and dejection, he changed the condition of the nation to ardour, strength, victory, glory, and triumph. Nor did Britain by her affection, gratitude, and admiration, or Europe by her astonishment, bear stronger testimonies of his exalted merit, than France by her hatred and terror for the name of Pitt. As Britain flourished while this statesman conducted her councils, from the time his direction ceased, her decline commenced; but, as he had caused her elevation by his own wisdom and vigour, he endeavoured to prevent her downfall through the rashness, folly, and weakness of others. From the rise of this innovating system of colonial policy, he perceived its tendency; and foresaw and foretold its effects. He tried to avert the evil, but his attempts were vain: a feeble body, a constitution debilitated by intense application, and labouring under grievous malady, obstructed his regular attendance in parliament, to deprecate pernicious measures; but, when he did appear, his speeches deserved record as the emphatic dictates of prophesying wisdom. Nature arrayed transcendence of genius, and grandeur of soul, in pleasing and striking colours, and bestowed on this favourite son an animated and expressive countenance, a tall and graceful figure, with a dignified mien and deportment.

This statesman possessed ambition in common with other great minds that are engaged in active life. If, however, he loved power, it was neither to enrich himself nor his friends, but to aggrandize his country, and humble her enemies. A more appropriate feature in his character, was contempt for tame mediocrity. He perhaps too much disdained that dexterity and address, which, though easily attained, and no indication of superior talents, often smooths the road for the execution of wise and beneficial plans; such a man must have seen the inferiority of his colleagues; but it was not necessary to his political purposes to make them feel that inferiority. His unbending resolution is an object of regret to patriots, as it produced his resignation, when his services were so essential to his country. In the various relations of private life, lord Chatham was amiable and estimable. He married a lady, whose talents and character rendered her worthy of such a husband; whose conversation solaced his mind in the hours of infirmity and pain, and whose views coincided, and efforts co-operated, with his own, in the tuition of their several children. Few and trivial were the blemishes, which merely showed that this

[Tribute to his memory. Application in favour of Ireland.]

extraordinary man was not exempted from the imperfections of humanity; but the historian who desires to narrate the truth, must endeavour to hand down to posterity William Pitt, earl of Chatham, as one of the chief glories of England.

When the intelligence of lord Chatham's death arrived, the house of commons being sitting, colonel Barré, in a concise but just eulogium, expressed the obligation of the country to the deceased statesman, and moved an address to his majesty, for directions that his remains should be interred at the public expense: the motion received general approbation. A monument was also proposed, and unanimously resolved to be erected in Westminster abbey. The following day it was stated to the house, that the illustrious object of their veneration, highly as he had benefited the nation, had been by no means equally attentive to his own private fortune; and that, notwithstanding his opportunities, he had left his family destitute of all suitable provision. An address was proposed and voted to his majesty, by which an annuity of 4000*l.* per annum was settled for ever on those heirs of the late earl of Chatham to whom the earldom might descend, and 20,000*l.* were granted for the payment of his debts.

Towards the close of this session, application was made to parliament in favour of Ireland, to relieve that country from sundry restraints respecting their manufactures and trade: these restrictions injured Ireland, it was alleged, without serving Britain. From the facts presented by lord Nugent, who introduced the business, and other collateral evidence, it appeared that the trade of Ireland had suffered severely during the war; that the exportation of Irish manufactures, was in a great measure suspended; that thence numbers of the people were deprived of their stated employments, and rendered destitute of the means of subsistence. The decay of the trade was still more severely felt, in consequence of very heavy additions which had been recently made to the civil establishment by the increase of pensions and other burthensome appointments: the relief solicited was to take off some of the many incumbrances which oppressed both the export and import traffic of that kingdom. In order to favour the woollen manufactory of England, the Irish had been hindered from manufacturing their own wool: the consequence was, that Irish wool was smuggled over into France, to the great detriment of British manufacturers, as with such materials France would soon be able to rival England. Bills were introduced to revive the trade and manufactures of Ireland, without injuring this country. The relief proposed in the house of commons was, first, that the Irish might be permitted to export directly to the British plantations or settlements all merchandise which should be the produce of that kingdom or of Great Britain, wool and woollen manufactures only excepted; as also foreign certificate goods legally imported: 2dly, that a direct importation should be allowed to all commodities being the produce of the British plantations, tobacco only excepted: 3dly, that the direct exportation of glass manufactured in Ireland should be permitted to all places except Great Britain: 4thly, that in the importation of cotton yarn the manufacture of Ireland should be allowed, duty free, in Great Britain: as also, 5thly, the importation of sailcloth and cordage. Bills founded on these propositions encountered a strong opposition. The projected change alarmed the merchants of Bristol and Liverpool,

[Repeal of king William's act respecting the Catholics.]

and also the manufacturers of Lancashire and the county of Nottingham, who strenuously opposed the admission of Ireland to a participation of the rights of British subjects; and a general alarm was spread through most of the trading and manufacturing parts of the kingdom. They considered the admittance of Ireland to any share of British trade, as not only destructive of their property, but being equally subversive of their rights. They were as little disposed to consent that the people of Ireland should cultivate their own manufactures, and dispose of their native commodities at the proper foreign markets, as they were to admit them to any limited degree of participation. After much discussion, in which the supporters of the bill had the advantage, it was agreed by both parties to defer the final adjustment until the next session of parliament. The opposers gave way to partial enlargements with regard to Irish trade, from which its supporters hoped that, by allowing them another session before its final determination, they might become well disposed to promote some of the propositions.

Sir Philip Jennings Clerk introduced a bill for restraining contractors with government from a seat in parliament, unless the contract should be made at a public bidding. The arguments on both sides were obvious: by the proposers of the law it was alleged, that contracts were often granted, on the most advantageous terms, for purposes of corruption: by its impugnors, that it would be very unjust to deprive an individual of his privileges as a British subject, because he had engaged to furnish at a stipulated price articles wanted for the public service. Members of parliament, who were debarred from this source of mercantile profit, if disposed to traffic in corruption, could easily accomplish their desire clandestinely through agents: the bill was rejected by a majority of only two, the numbers being against it 115, for it 113.

On the 14th of May, near the close of the session, sir George Saville proposed a bill for the repeal of certain penalties and disabilities, that were established by an act of the tenth of William III. for preventing the farther growth of popery. The legal and political ability of Mr. Dunning was chiefly employed in explaining the evils now proposed to be removed. By the act in question, popish priests or Jesuits, found to officiate in the service of the Romish church, incurred the penalties of felony if foreigners, and of high treason if natives; the successions of popish heirs educated abroad were forfeited, and their estates descended to the next protestant heir: a son, or other nearest protestant relation might take possession of the estate of a father or other next kinsman of the popish persuasion, during the life of the real proprietor; papists were prevented from acquiring any legal property by *purchase*, a term which in law included every mode of acquiring property, but descent; and thus the various sources of acquisition were shut up from the Roman catholics. The mildness of government had softened the rigour of the law; but it was to be remembered, that popish priests constantly lay at the mercy of the basest of mankind, common informers. On the evidence of any of these wretches, the magisterial and judicial powers were necessitated to enforce all the shameful penalties of the act. Others of these punishments held out powerful temptations to horrible and flagitious crimes. They seemed fitted to poison the sources of domestic felicity, to

[Supplies and taxes. Motion respecting expenditure.]

dissolve civil, moral, and religious obligations and duties, and to loosen all the bonds of society. Besides the intolerant and oppressive principle of the act, it appeared from the history of its enactment,* that it was a measure of party intrigue more than of general policy. Even if there then existed reasons which justified severity, they were no longer in force. The Roman catholics had conducted themselves with unquestionable propriety during the present reign, and had that very session presented a petition, expressive of their loyalty and attachment to the king and government, and their resolution, at the risk of their lives and fortunes, to defend their king and country against the apprehended invasion of the French and all their enemies. The ministerial party was extremely well inclined to show favour to such meritorious subjects; and, though aware of their general unpopularity, they did not themselves choose to hazard a proposition which would most probably excite alarm among the protestants; they very gladly adopted therefore the measure when brought forward by opposition, and the bill passed both houses without a division.

The supplies for this year were sixty thousand seamen, with a considerable augmentation of land forces. The ways and means were a loan of six millions at three per cent. with an annuity of two pounds ten shillings for a certain number of years, or for life; the sum of 480,000*l.* was raised by a lottery, and two millions by exchequer bills. The new taxes were, an additional duty of eight guineas per ton imposed on all French wines, and four guineas on all other wines, six-pence in the pound on houses valued from five to fifty pounds a year, and one shilling on all above fifty pounds. The house tax bill was strongly opposed, as unjust, partial, and oppressive; from the high value of the houses in London, it was asserted that nine-tenths of the burthen would be borne by the metropolis. It was answered, that the value of houses arose chiefly from their situation, which rendered them pleasant, convenient, or profitable to their occupiers, and that the advantages much more than compensated the expense even with this addition: that, in other commercial places, rents rose in proportion to their lucrative situation, and that other parts of the kingdom would contribute a much greater share of the tax than had been asserted: the houses in every town or village as well as in London, would pay in proportion to the benefit arising from the situation. Beside the specific sums granted by parliament, an application was made for a vote of credit. This requisition occasioned a very warm debate: opposition contended, that the incapacity of administration was so glaring, and their conduct so very absurd and ruinous, that it would be extremely imprudent to trust to their discretion. Ministers defended their own measures, and insisted that a vote of credit was both usual and necessary in such circumstances, and that, though the assertions of opposition, if *proved*, would demonstrate them unfit for their offices, yet, until the allegations were established on better grounds than declamatory invective, the present counsellors, having the confidence of parliament, remained in their offices; and the public service therefore required, they should be furnished with the means of discharging their duties. The minority appeared not to have meant any objection to the vote of credit, since, notwithstanding the eloquence exerted on the subject, they suffered it to pass without a division.

* See Burnet's History of his own Times.

[Prorogation of parliament. Dignified speech of the king.]

The charge of boundless expenditure was a frequent theme of animadversion during the session, and a committee was proposed for inspecting the public accounts; but the motion was controverted by the supporters of administration, who declared, that the prudence and economy of ministers were so very great and satisfactory, that all examination of accounts would be superfluous. If undue profits in some particular instances had been obtained by contractors, the treasury would oblige them to refund such sums, as soon as the necessary inquiry should be made. The inspection might be productive of great mischief, by disseminating ill-founded jealousies and suspicions among the people. Although this reasoning, that it was unnecessary to investigate the management of pecuniary stewards, because they themselves and their connexions asserted that they were prudent and economical, may not convince an impartial reader, yet it convinced the majority in the house of commons, and the desired inquiry was prevented.

On the 3d of June, parliament was prorogued. His majesty in his speech on this occasion, after returning thanks to parliament for their wise deliberations and vigorous efforts, expressed himself respecting the interference of France, with a dignity and magnanimity worthy of the first personage in the first nation of the universe. He spoke the merited resentment of conscious justice, supported by conscious power. "My desire (said our king) to preserve the tranquillity of Europe, has been uniform and sincere; I reflect with great satisfaction, that I have made the faith of treaties, and the law of nations, the rule of my conduct; and that it has been my constant care to give no just cause of offence to any foreign power: let that power, by whom this tranquillity shall be disturbed, answer to their subjects, and to the world, for all the fatal consequences of war: the vigour and firmness of my parliament, have enabled me to be prepared for such events and emergencies as may happen; and I trust that the experienced valour and discipline of my fleets and armies, and the loyal and united ardour of the nation, armed and animated in the defence of every thing that is dear to them, will be able, under the protection of Divine Providence, to defeat all the enterprises which the enemies of my crown may presume to undertake, and convince them how dangerous it is to provoke the spirit and strength of Great Britain."

CHAP. XXI.

Campaign opens in America.—Operations by detachments from general Howe's army.—Howe resigns the command—festival in honour of him, under the name of Mischianza—departs for Europe—and is succeeded by sir Henry Clinton.—Arrival of commissioners from Britain.—The Americans refuse to treat, unless as an independent nation.—Evacuation of Philadelphia—and march through the Jerseys.—Battle of Red Bank court-house—the British army is successful—and arrives at New-York.—D'Esterre arrives with a French fleet—maritime operations.—Attempts upon Rhode Island.—Partial and detached expeditions.—D'Esterre departs for the West-Indies.—Farther proceedings of the commissioners—issue a proclamation without effect—return to England.—Congress publish a counter manifesto.—Hostilities in Europe.—Admiral Keppel takes the command of the channel fleet.—Capture of the *Lieorne* French frigate—of the *Pallas*.—Keppel returns to Portsmouth for a re-enforcement—sails in pursuit of the enemy—descries the French fleet off Ushant.—Battle of the 27th of July indecisive.—The French fleet retires during the night.—Apprehensive of a lee shore, Keppel forbears pursuit.—Captures by frigates and privateers.—Balance greatly favourable to England.—Depredations by Paul Jones—plunders the seat of lord Selkirk.—Crimination and recrimination by Keppel and Fallisier—are respectively tried and acquitted.

From political proceedings we now return to military transactions. The hostile armies at Philadelphia and Valley Forge passed the severity of the winter within a few miles of each other, in great tranquillity. Spring arrived, and the commander in chief continued to repose himself at Philadelphia; he, however, sent out several occasional detachments, which displayed British intrepidity and skill in desultory operations, without any material result. In the beginning of March, colonel Mawhood was sent with the 27th and 46th regiments, and the New-Jersey volunteers, to make a descent on the coast of Jersey, to procure forage, and assist the royalists, who were severely oppressed by Livingston, the American governor. Various creeks communicate with the Delaware on the Jersey side; over the Allewas, one of these, there were three bridges; Thompson's farthest up, St. Quinton's in the middle, and Hancock's next the river. At the two last the provincials determined to make a stand. Mawhood having pretended to retreat, enticed the Americans to cross St. Quinton's bridge, and fall into an ambuscade which he had previously formed; the enemy being surrounded, most of them were either killed, taken prisoners, or drowned. Major Simcoe, being employed to attack the party posted at Hancock's bridge, crossed the creek in boats by night with a party of soldiers; assailed, surprised, and dispersed the Americans; and secured a passage for the whole British detachment: colonel Mawhood having completed his forage, returned to Philadelphia. In the beginning of May, an American brigade, commanded by general Lacy of the Pennsylvania militia, being posted at the Crooked-billet, on one of the chief roads between the country and Philadelphia, obstructed the approaches of farmers with provisions for the city.

[Resignation of general Howe.]

That enterprising and intelligent officer, major Simcoe, having perceived this position and discovered its object, proposed to march round with the queen's rangers, so as to gain the rear of the enemy, while another party should lie in ambuscade to intercept their retreat to Washington's army. The scheme being approved, colonel Abercrombie was appointed to command the ambuscade, and to lie in wait till he should hear the firing of Simcoe's corps. On the 30th of May, major Simcoe set off with his detachment by the projected route, and afterwards Abercrombie departed with about four hundred light infantry, a large party of light dragoons, and horses, for the sake of greater expedition, to mount his foot soldiers. The colonel could not reach the place of his destination at the appointed time during the night; eager, however, to support major Simcoe, he sent forward his cavalry and light infantry. The commander of the advanced corps having proceeded as far as Lacy's outpost, was seen and fired at by the enemy's sentinel, but did not retire. The American commander concluding a stronger force to be at hand, immediately filed up the country, and, by abandoning his baggage, escaped the pursuit. The British troops having dislodged the provincials, returned with the captured baggage to Philadelphia; and, by the success of this excursion, greatly facilitated the conveyance of provisions to the British army. An expedition being sent under majors Maitland and Simcoe, destroyed a great number of American vessels, that had escaped the preceding campaign at the capture of the forts on the Delaware. These desultory enterprises proved that British courage and conduct by land and water were equal to the efforts of former times, however little they conduced to the promotion of British interest.

For several months, sir William Howe had resolved to resign his command, and intimated his intention to lord George Germaine. His alleged ground for desiring to be recalled was, that he had not received the necessary confidence and support from administration. Ministers expressed the utmost surprise at his complaint, the grounds of which they affirmed were fully confuted by the written authority with which he was intrusted, and the force with which he was furnished. The requested permission, however, was granted, and the general accordingly prepared to depart for Europe.

The easy and agreeable manners and indulgent conduct of general Howe, had gained the affection of many of his officers. Those viewing his exploits and services through the partial medium of attachment, attributed to them a merit and efficacy greater than that which has been allowed them by the rigorous scrutiny of impartial judgment. As a testimony of the high estimation in which they held their general, some of his officers gave in honour of him, when about to resign his command, a festival, which they denominated a *Mischienza*. The exhibition, indeed, was of a miscellaneous nature, and partook partly of the nature of Roman spectacles on the return of victorious generals to their grateful country; the general marched through the army between two triumphal arches. His train of attendants, however, seven silken knights of the blended rose, seven silken knights of the burning mountain, and fourteen damsels representing the paragons of knight errantry, called before the imagination the *fabulous* glory of chivalrous ages. A tilt and tournament, or *mock representation of warlike achievements*, made a part of the entertainment. On the top of each triumphal arch was placed a figure

[Arrival of the British commissioners. Answer of congress.]

of Fame, ornamented with stars, blowing from her trumpet, in letters of light, *Tes lauriers sont immortels*.* While the multitude were dazzled by the splendour of this magnificent spectacle, some of the bystanders, whose fancies had not been sublimed into the regions of romance, but suffered their memories fully to recollect, and their judgments to appreciate, actual performance, wondered where, when, and how these *immortal laurels* had been earned. Soon after this signal testimony of esteem and admiration had been adduced in favour of his exploits as commander in chief, sir William Howe returned to Europe, and the office which he left was conferred on sir Henry Clinton.

The British commissioners now arrived with conciliatory propositions. To the success of their mission, many obstacles were foreseen; but some had lately occurred which had not been expected. Before the completion of the treaty between France and the Americans, the court of Versailles stated a difficulty, without the removal of which they said they could not accede to an alliance. Were Britain and America to be reconciled, on terms by which the latter should renounce her independence, the engagements which she might have contracted would be no longer valid. To destroy this ground of objection, the congress, in November 1777, entered into a resolution, declaring, that they would reject all proposals for a treaty with the king of Great Britain which should be inconsistent with the independence of the United States, or with such alliances as might be formed under their authority. In the following April, having seen copies of the conciliatory bills, they, on the 22d of that month, passed resolutions, expressing reprobation of the conduct of the British parliament, as persevering in the same coercive plans, but by indirect and insidious means; and declaring their contempt of the artifices and dissimulation by which England endeavoured to put them in execution. The general spirit of their proceedings was continuance in hostility to Britain, and amity to France; and the tendency of their acts was to promote the same sentiments among the people. On the second of May, Silas Dean arrived at York Town with copies of the treaties concluded between France and America at Paris. The congress immediately published a gazette, which, besides a summary of the whole, exhibited the most flattering articles, accompanied by comments, in which they extolled to the people the extraordinary equity, generosity, and unparalleled honour of the French king. They appeared to consider Spain as already a party in the confederacy; the other great powers of Europe as favourable to America, and desiring the humiliation of England. In such a state of American enmity to Great Britain, and exulting hopes of success, the commissioners arrived with their pacificatory proposals. On the 9th of June, they applied for a passport to their secretary, doctor Ferguson, who, they intended, should convey their propositions to the congress, and conduct the negotiation with that body. General Washington refused a passport, until he should consult the congress; whereupon the commissioners forwarded their papers by the ordinary military posts, and they reached the congress on the 11th of June. On the 17th, a brief, but decisive answer was returned by its president, manifesting a determination to maintain their independence, to adhere to the engagements with France, which as an independent nation they had contracted, and

* Annual Register, 1778.

[Evacuation of Philadelphia. March through the Jerseys.]

to reject the present proposition, which did not admit that independence. Reprobating the war as unjust in principle and barbarous in conduct, they notwithstanding declared their willingness to enter, as an independent state, into any negotiation consistent with their present treaties.* In a paper of the same date, the congress issued its approbation of general Washington's refusal of a passport to the British secretary.

This answer plainly showed, that all attempts to conciliate America on the principles and plan proposed by parliament would be ineffectual, and proved that Britain either should have persisted in coercion, or offered terms more suitable to the present state of sentiments and affairs. The offer, indeed, by flattering the pride, encouraged the perseverance of the American republicans; it confirmed the authority of the congress, and proved to Britain, that the only alternative was entire conquest, or the acknowledgment (really at least, if not verbally) that they were no longer subject to our power; it held out to the loyalists the discomfiture of their party, the proscription of their property, and exile from their native country; and dispirited the officers and soldiers themselves, by deeply impressing them with an idea, that the service in which they were employed was considered as hopeless.

A plan of operations had been formed for the campaign, should the proposed treaty fail. The first movement enjoined by the British ministers through lord Carlisle to the commander in chief was the evacuation of Philadelphia. The abandonment of the chief city in America, and the principal object of so powerful an army during the whole campaign, was by no means calculated to dishearten our enemies, or the Americans, or to encourage the loyalists; nevertheless there existed circumstances which rendered such a measure expedient. We were no longer at war against the revolted colonies alone, but were contending with the chief maritime power of the world after our own. France had sent out from Toulon a great naval armament, of which the destination might either be America or the West Indies; if the former, the fleet under lord Howe, very inferior in force, might be blocked up within the long and winding river of Delaware, that abounded in shoals, and other impediments to navigation; besides, the army ought to occupy a station from which re-enforcements might be most easily and expeditiously sent wherever they were required. For this purpose Philadelphia, so distant from the sea, was totally unfit; by returning to New-York, they could despatch troops to any other situation that might most advantageously employ their exertions: for these reasons, government determined to direct the evacuation of Philadelphia.

On the 18th of June, the army passed the Delaware, and the same day encamped on the Jersey shore. The country through which they had to march, was strong, and intersected by defiles; lest these being occupied should obstruct his progress, sir Henry Clinton thought it necessary to carry along with him a large supply of provisions, which, together with the baggage, greatly retarded the progress of the army. The excessive heat of the weather, the closeness of the roads through the woods, the constant labour of constructing or repairing bridges in a country abounding in creeks, brooks, and marshes, were all severely felt by

* See Mr. President Henry Lawrence's answer to the British commissioners, dated June 17th, 1778, in the collection of state papers for that year.

[Battle of Monmouth. Arrival of the French fleet.]

the British forces. Washington, having discovered the design of Clinton, detached general Maxwell to obstruct a retreat, until he himself should cross the American army. For several days the provincials were not able materially to interrupt the British army; our light troops expelled them from the defiles, and the only obstructions arose from the bridges being destroyed. The army now came to a place where the road was divided into two branches: that to the left was the shortest, but the river Rariton intervened; the passage of which, in the face of an enemy superior in number, might be both difficult and dangerous; more especially as intelligence was received, that Gates was advancing from the north, to form a junction with Washington near that river. Sir Henry Clinton accordingly took the most circuitous route, nearer to the coast. Having proceeded some miles, he encamped on the 27th on a high ground in the neighborhood of Freehold court-house. Washington had before kept to the left, and being now re-enforced, posted himself within a few miles of the British rear. Clinton having sent forward the baggage under Knyphausen with the first division of the army, he himself with the last waited the approach of the enemy, and on the 28th of June was informed that large bodies of the provincials were marching on both his flanks, while a considerable division followed himself. Suspecting that the object of the Americans on his flanks was to overtake Knyphausen, who was now retarded by defiles, he determined to attack the provincials who hovered on his rear, that they might recall their detachments from annoying Knyphausen. Though he was by this time, in prosecution of his march, descended into a plain, and the enemy had occupied the eminence which he had just left, he attacked them, compelled them to fly, and would have destroyed the whole front division, had not Washington, by occupying a defile with his main body, repressed the pursuit. The light troops who had been sent forward to attack Knyphausen, were repulsed by that general, and recalled, to join and support the main army. The loss of the British that day, in killed, wounded and missing, amounted to three hundred and fifty eight; that of the Americans, to three hundred and sixty-one. Little as was the difference in point of numbers, it appears, from his subsequent conduct, that general Washington thought himself worsted, as he did not afterwards attempt to disturb the British retreat, but marched away to the left towards the North river. The circumstances of the engagement produced a quarrel between Lee and Washington. According to Washington, Lee, who commanded the advanced corps, had disobeyed orders, in not attacking the enemy when they were on the plain, and he on the declivity: and farther charged him with want either of conduct or courage in retreating before the British, though he was so advantageously posted. Lee wrote a very angry letter; Washington answered; Lee replied still more violently: a court-martial was demanded and ordered; the charges were, disrespect to the general, and misbehaviour in an unnecessary and shameful retreat. He was suspended from his command for twelve months. Meanwhile the British army arrived in safety at Sandy Hook, where they found lord Howe landed the preceding day: on the 5th of July the army embarking came to New-York the same night.

The count D'Estaing sailed from Toulon the 13th of April, with twelve ships of the line and six frigates, carrying a considerable number of troops on board; but from adverse winds, did not pass the straits of

[Maritime operations.]

Gibraltar till the 15th of May. The British ministry, who were not apprized of this equipment, got ready a fleet of an equal number of ships, the command of which was given to vice-admiral Byron. The armament left Portsmouth on the 20th of May, and proceeding to Plymouth, finally sailed from thence on the 9th of June, after such advices had been received as no longer left it doubtful that the Toulon squadron was bound to North America. D'Estaing arrived on the coast of Virginia on the 5th of July, but hearing of the evacuation of Philadelphia, sailed to the northward; and on the 11th of July, in the evening, came to an anchor off New-York, with an apparent design of attempting to enter the harbour. The naval force under lord Howe consisted only of six ships of the line, and four of fifty guns, with a proportional number of frigates and smaller vessels. Intelligence of the count D'Estaing's approach having been received some days before he came in sight, a masterly disposition of their force for the defence of the harbour was made, under the immediate direction of the admiral, whose exertions were nobly seconded by the universal ardour which prevailed, not only in the navy, army, and transport service, but among all ranks and classes of people at New-York. Some time after D'Estaing's arrival, the wind was unfavourable to the execution of his supposed intention; but on the 22d of July it changed to the eastward, and the French fleet was seen weighing anchor. The long meditated attack, it was now supposed, would instantly commence; and so confident were all it would prove abortive, that the critical moment which was to decide, not only the fate of the British fleet but of the army, was expected with impatience. But D'Estaing, to their great disappointment, as soon as his ships had weighed anchor, instead of attempting to enter the harbour, made sail to the southward. He afterwards changed his course and steered directly to Rhode Island, before which he arrived on the 29th of July. Lord Howe being informed of the enemy's station, determined to attempt the preservation of the island; but, as he was inferior in number, not to venture an engagement, without some considerable advantage, which might counterbalance their superiority. For several months the expulsion of the British troops from Rhode Island, had been in contemplation of the provincials. In spring, general Sullivan was sent to take the command in its neighbourhood, and made preparation for invading this province. To these dispositions, major-general Pigot, who commanded at Rhode Island, was not inattentive; he readily perceived their object, and, in order to retard them, sent two detachments under lieutenant-colonel Campbell and major Eyre, who destroyed or took the vessels, naval stores, and ordnance, which were prepared for the invasion, and burnt their ship timber and dockyards. From these losses, the provincials were not in readiness for co-operation, when D'Estaing arrived off Rhode-Island. Lord Howe, after being detained four days by contrary winds, put to sea on the 6th of August with the British fleet, which was now increased to eight ships of the line, five of fifty guns, two of forty-four guns, and four frigates, with three fire-ships, two bombs, and a number of smaller vessels. Justly deeming the weather-gage too great an advantage to be added to the superior force of the enemy, the British admiral skilfully and ably contended for that important object, while D'Estaing was no less anxious to preserve it in his own favour. The contest of seamanship prevented an engagement on that day; but the wind on the following day, still continuing ad-

[Naval engagements. Attempt on Rhode Island.]

verse to the design of the British admiral, he determined to make the best of the present circumstances, and to engage the enemy; forming the line in such a manner, as to be joined by three fire-ships which were under the tow of as many frigates. When the fleets were about to engage, a strong gale of wind increased to a tremendous storm, and continuing for near two days, by separating the fleets, not only prevented immediate battle, but so dispersed and damaged the vessels of both parties, as to render an engagement for some time impracticable. The accidental meeting of single ships after the tempest, produced conflicts which afforded new specimens of British valour and nautical skill. Captain Dawson, of the *Renown* of fifty guns, on the evening of the 13th, fell in with the French admiral's ship, the *Languedoc* of eighty-four, and notwithstanding the great difference of metal, attacked her with evident advantage until darkness put an end to the contest. The next morning the gallant Dawson was preparing to renew the conflict, when the appearance of six more of the enemy's ships compelled him to retire. The same evening, captain Hotham, with the *Preston* of fifty guns, attacked the *Tonant*, a French ship of eighty guns, with similar vigour and success; being also the next morning obliged to desist, by the arrival of several other ships. On the 16th of August, captain Raynor, of the *Isis*, also of fifty guns, attacked the *Cæsar* of seventy-four, and after an engagement for an hour and a half, forced her to retreat; but being herself damaged in her rigging, was incapable of pursuit. The loss of the English ship consisted of one killed and fifteen wounded; of the enemy fifty killed and wounded. The French ship was, besides, so much injured in her hull, that she was compelled to go into Boston to refit. No portion of the history of war can the patriotic author write, or the patriotic reader peruse, with more exulting pleasure, than accounts of actions which manifest British bravery and conduct with inferior force triumphant on our peculiar element. The disabled ships of Britain went to New York to refit, while the French admiral, with the same intent, betook himself to Boston. When lord Howe's squadron was repaired, being now increased by the arrival of the *Monmouth*, one of admiral Byron's fleet, he, on the 30th of August, sailed to the bay of Boston, in pursuit of the enemy: but found their fleet so well secured by their position, under cover of land batteries, that he thought it prudent to retire. Returning to New-York, he found more ships of Byron's squadron arrived, and the admiral himself daily expected. The naval force of England, on the admiral's station, being now undoubtedly superior to that of the enemy, lord Howe, having previously obtained leave to return to England, on account of his health, resigned the command to admiral Gambier, and departed for Europe.

The Americans trusting to the co-operation of the French fleet, had sent an army of ten thousand men, under general Sullivan to Rhode Island, and commenced their operations. But the dispersion of the French fleet, and its final departure for Boston, daunted their spirits, induced many to desert and left the remainder inferior to the British garrison. General Sullivan thereupon began his retreat, and departed in the night of the 28th of August several hours before the British perceived they were gone. Sir Robert Pigot, the English commander, followed on the 29th, attacked the rear division, and gained an advantage; but not so decisive as to prevent the Americans from continuing their route. Sir Henry Clinton, who was hastening by sea to relieve Rhode

[Partial expeditions. D'Estaing sails for the West Indies.]

Island, arrived one day too late to intercept the retreating Americans. Although the detention of sir Henry Clinton probably saved Sullivan's corps from destruction, yet the miscarriage of the first enterprise, which they had undertaken in concert with France, not only disappointed, but offended the Americans; and though the officers and gentlemen endeavoured to dissemble every appearance of displeasure, the commonalty, less restrained by delicacy and policy, gave loose to their feelings. Indeed, scarcely two nations could be found in the civilized world, whose manners could be so reciprocally repulsive, as the sanctimonious austerity of the New-Englanders, and the gay levity and dissipated libertinism of Frenchmen. Between the seamen of both countries, outrages and riots took place, that were like to have been attended with very serious consequences; the leading men of Boston, however, exerted themselves successfully to appease the tumults, and to give satisfaction to their new allies. General Clinton having returned towards New-York, concerted several expeditions for destroying privateers. Major-general Grey being detached to Buzzard-bay in New-England, landed on the banks of the Acushmet river, and executed his enterprise with such rapidity, that in less than one day he burned and destroyed all the ships in the river, amounting to more than seventy sail. The next day proceeding to Martha's Vineyard, a fertile and rich island, he destroyed several vessels, and carrying off a valuable booty in provisions, returned to New-York. Lord Cornwallis soon afterwards undertook the direction of an expedition to Little Egg-harbour, on the coast of Jersey, which was also a general receptacle for privateers: one division of the detachment surprised and surrounded an American regiment of light horse; during the night, at Old Tapan on the North river; the greater number were killed, or taken prisoners. Captain Patrick Fergusson undertook to conduct the enterprise to Little Egg-harbour, and by combined valour, activity, and skill, surprised an American legion under count Pulaski. The success of this enterprise depending on celerity of execution, a great carnage unavoidably took place. The Americans poured out virulent invectives against what they termed the cruelty of the British; but it does not appear that any act was committed inconsistent with the laws of war. This was the last action of any importance performed by the British during this campaign in North America. The weather was that year extremely tempestuous on the American ocean; admiral Byron's fleet had been dispersed and separated by a storm on its passage from Europe. After being refitted at New-York, he again went to sea with a view to block up the French fleet in Boston-bay; but a second tempest drove him from that station. The count D'Estaing, taking the opportunity of the British admiral's absence, sailed to the West Indies.

While these operations were carrying on by land and sea, the commissioners continued in America, determined to leave nothing undone that might effect their purpose. Although hopeless of success from the first answer of the congress, they thought it necessary to reply; desiring an explanation of the sense in which the term independence was to be understood, and copies of the treaties with foreign powers, which had been referred to by the congress. Respecting the second preliminary, they declared the proposed removal of the troops inadmissible, as a force must necessarily be kept for defence against the common enemy, and for the protection of the loyalists. To this second letter of the commissioners no answer was given.

[Further proceedings of the commissioners.]

Governor Johnstone being individually acquainted with several gentlemen of character and influence, tried to obtain a personal interview, in hopes of convincing them that it was the interest of the colonies to renew their amity with the mother country; for that purpose he requested admission to several gentlemen, but a decided negative was returned; he also wrote letters to different individuals, paragraphs of which were construed into an attempt to corrupt the integrity of the leaders. One of these is addressed to general Reed, and the following is the paragraph that underwent the interpretation. After an eloquent description of the evils flowing from the existing dissensions, and the blessings of reconciliation, the writer proceeds: "The man who can be instrumental in bringing us all to act once more in harmony, and unite together the various powers which this contest has drawn forth, will deserve more from the king and people, from patriotism, humanity, friendship, and all the tender ties that are affected by the quarrel, than were ever yet bestowed on human kind." On the 16th of June in a private letter to Robert Morris, esq. formerly his friend, he says, "I believe the men who have conducted the affairs of America are incapable of being influenced by improper motives; but in all such transactions there is risk, and I think that whoever ventures should be secured; at the same time that honour and emolument shall naturally follow the fortune of those who have steered the vessel in the storm, and brought her safely to port. I think that Washington and the president have a right to every favour that grateful nations can bestow, if they could once more unite our interests, and spare the miseries and devastations of war."

The congress published the letters above mentioned by governor Johnstone, and attempted to construe them into an endeavour to bribe. The letters themselves express no such intention;* they merely hold out a prospect of honour and reward for meritorious conduct. The congress, that they might inflame the passions of the people, issued a declaration that it was incompatible with the honour of congress to hold any farther communication with governor Johnstone. The British commissioners, finding it was in vain to hope for the accomplishment of this great object, now confined their application to subordinate purposes. One of these was concerning the captured army of general Burgoyne. By one of the articles of capitulation it was stipulated, that the surrendering army should be at liberty to transport itself to Great Britain; on condition of not serving again in America during the war. Boston, the place from which it was to embark, was difficult of access to transports at that season of the year, which was the middle of winter; general Burgoyne applied for leave to march the troops to Rhode Island, that they might there embark. This request the congress not only refused, which was merely the denial of a solicited favour, but they declared a resolution of violating a solemn compact; they resolved to prohibit the embarkation of the Saratoga troops from any port whatsoever, until a distinct and explicit ratification of the convention of Saratoga should be properly noticed by the court of Great Britain to congress; and entered upon

* Mr. Belsham alleges, that Mr. Johnstone employed a Mrs. Fergusson, as the agent in his proposed corruption. As he adduces no proofs to support his assertion, although he says the fact was clearly ascertained, an impartial historian cannot admit the charge on so very vague an evidence.

[They issue a proclamation and return to England.]

their journals a resolution to that effect. This resolution was evidently a breach of the convention, as the now desired ratification was no part of that treaty. The commissioners, in a letter dated the 7th of August, remonstrated against the detention of the troops, contrary to the faith of treaties. Without answering this remonstrance, they entered into a charge against governor Johnstone, with whom they declared they could hold no communication. Governor Johnstone, to remove the pretended bar to intercourse, withdrew himself from the commission; and, in the public act by which he testified this determination, he very severely reprehended the conduct of the congress, and exposed the shallow pretext by which they endeavoured to cover their own breach of faith. These assertions respecting him, indeed, were never proved; and if they had been established, their authentication could not have justified the conduct of the Americans. even if Mr. Johnstone had attempted to bribe, the endeavour would not have justified a *breach of contract* with others not concerned in that endeavour. Governor Johnstone set off for Europe, leaving an able vindication of his conduct, in a letter addressed to his friend doctor Adam Fergusson. Meanwhile the remaining commissioners attempted by new arguments to show the congress the real views of France, and how little advantage they could reasonably expect from this connexion; they also sent again their former remonstrance, without the signature of governor Johnstone; and offered to ratify, in the king's name, all the conditions of the Saratoga convention, though such ratification was no part of its terms; but the congress persevered in the breach of faith. The troops which had surrendered at Saratoga, having trusted to a convention stipulating their free return to Great Britain, were detained in captivity by the American congress violating a contract.

The commissioners sent no more letters to the congress: but published, on the 3d of October, a manifesto and proclamation, addressed to the members of the congress, and the members of the general assemblies or conventions of the several colonies. In this paper, they recapitulated the steps which they had taken for executing the objects of their commission; they enumerated their repeated endeavours to restore tranquillity and happiness to America; and stated the extent and beneficial tendency of the terms which they were empowered to offer: notwithstanding the obstructions they had encountered, they still declared their readiness to proceed in the execution of the powers contained in their commission, and to treat not only with deputies from all the colonies conjunctly, but with any provincial assembly or convention individually, at any time within the space of forty days from the date of their manifesto; next addressing themselves to all persons, ecclesiastical, military, civil, or private, and suggesting to the consideration of each of these classes, such motives as might be supposed to have the greatest influence, they adjured them not to let pass so favourable an opportunity of securing their liberties, future prosperity, and happiness, upon a permanent foundation: lastly, they appealed to the Americans collectively, in the following terms: "It will now become the colonies in general to call to mind their own solemn appeals to heaven in the beginning of this contest, that they took arms only for the redress of grievances; and that it was their wish, as well as their interest, to remain for ever connected with Great Britain. We again ask them, whether all their grievances, real or supposed, have not been amply and fully redressed? and we im-

[Admiral Keppel takes command of the channel fleet.]

sist that the offers we have made, leave nothing to be wished, in point of either immediate liberty or permanent security." The manifesto observed, that the policy as well as the benevolence of Great Britain checked the extremes of war, when they tended to distress a people who were still considered as our fellow-subjects, and to desolate a country which was shortly to become again a source of mutual advantage. But when that country professed the unnatural design, not only of estranging her interests from ours, but of mortgaging herself and her resources to our enemies, the whole contest was changed, and the question was, how far Great Britain may, by every means in her power, destroy or render useless a connexion contrived for her ruin, and for the aggrandizement of her enemy? Under such circumstances, the laws of self-preservation must direct the conduct of Great Britain, to render the accession of the American colonies as little beneficial as possible to France. The commissioners having remained until the forty days were expired, and not finding the proclamation likely to produce any conciliatory effect, set sail for Europe. The congress soon after published a counter manifesto, in which they affected to consider the proclamation of the commissioners as denouncing new schemes of vengeance and desolation, and declared their resolution to retaliate with the utmost severity.

Hostilities in Europe were entirely maritime, and confined to the sea near the northwest coast of France. The French government, as soon as it had resolved on war, employed the most assiduous and vigorous preparations to equip a fleet sufficient to cope with England. In order to distract the attention of Great Britain, they pretended to threaten an invasion; and brought large bodies of troops to their northern coast. The British government ordered the militia to be embodied, and considerable numbers of soldiers to march to the vicinity of the coast; they directed camps to be formed at Winchester, Salisbury, and St. Edmondsbury, Warley common, and Coxheath; but they trusted the protection of the country chiefly to the fleet.

From the first appearance of probable hostilities between Great Britain and France so early as November 1776, lord Sandwich had cast his eyes on admiral Keppel as the most proper person to be intrusted with the important station. This gentleman had distinguished himself at the Havannah, being then second in command, and was highly esteemed and beloved in the navy. Having conversed with Mr. Keppel, lord Sandwich found that, if the circumstances of the country required his efforts, his services would not be wanting: the admiral was indeed politically connected with opposition; but when war with France was become unavoidable, he, in consequence of his disposition before signified, was offered an appointment, which he accepted. In the beginning of June, a fleet of twenty ships of the line was ready for service. With these under his command, the admiral set sail on the 13th of that month, to protect our commerce, defend our coasts, and watch the motions of the enemy. The powers reposed in the admiral, were discretionary and unlimited. Sir Robert Harland and sir Hugh Palliser, two gentlemen high in his estimation and in the opinion of the public, were respectively appointed second and third in command. At this time war had not been declared, nor were reprisals ordered. The fleet proceeded to the bay of Biscay.

On the 17th of June, two French frigates were seen reconnoitring the

[Capture of several French frigates.]

British fleet; one of them, the *Licorne* of 32 guns, being overtaken by some of our ships, for some hours sailed with them; but manifesting an intention of departure, a shot was fired over her, when, to the astonishment of our fleet, she poured a broadside into the *America*, one of our ships of the line, and immediately struck her colours. To render this procedure the more extraordinary, lord Longford, captain of the *America*, and the French commander, were from their respective ships engaged in amicable conversation. Longford, instead of sinking the French frigate for her wanton attack, with cool magnanimity sent her under the stern of the *Victory*. The other ship, the *Belle Poule*, a large frigate, was closely pursued by the *Arethusa* of 32 guns, but not overtaken till at a great distance from the fleet. Captain Marshal, the British commander, informed the French captain, that he had orders from the admiral to conduct him to the fleet; but the Frenchman peremptorily refused to comply. Marshal fired across the ship; the answer was a broadside: a desperate engagement ensued; the *Arethusa* suffered much in her rigging, the *Belle Poule* in her hull, and great numbers were killed. The Frenchman perceiving the other so much damaged as to be unable to pursue, embraced the opportunity of retiring to the coast. This advantage, gained over superior numbers and weight of metal in the first conflict, much delighted the British sailors, and was reckoned ominous of future success. The next morning, the *Pallas*, another French frigate of 32 guns, approaching to reconnoitre the fleet, was pursued and taken, and with the *Licorne* sent into Plymouth. The French exclaimed against the detention of the two frigates, and pretended to assert that Britain was the aggressor, although France had before began hostilities, by abetting the Americans in their revolt from their mother country. Although admiral Keppel seized two French frigates for improper conduct in the commanders, he abstained from their merchantmen, as letters of reprisal had not issued. This forbearance in our naval commander may perhaps have been right; but, as the hostile conduct of France justified hostilities from England, the more effectually they had been begun, the greater would be the prospect of ultimate success. The capture of their trading vessels, as in the commencement of the former war, would have distressed the enemy, by depriving them both of sailors and riches. Admiral Keppel being informed that the French fleet lying in Brest water amounted to thirty-two ships of the line, repaired to St. Helen's for a reinforcement. The return of the Admiral occasioned very great astonishment and consternation, not without a mixture of dissatisfaction; but ministers lost no time in augmenting† his armament; lord Sandwich instantly set off for Portsmouth, and in a fortnight, ten ships of the line were added to Keppel's fleet. In the middle of July he set sail at the head of thirty British ships of the line, one of them the *Victory*, of the first rate, six of 90 guns, and the rest of the third rate. The fleet was formed into three divisions, the van commanded by sir Robert Harland, the rear by sir Hugh Palliser, and the centre by the admiral himself. Reprisals having been now issued, the French fleet had left Brest harbour on the 8th of July, commanded by count D'Orvilliers, and was cruising off the coast of Bretagne. On the 23d of July, in the afternoon, the fleets descried each other; the British ships being dispersed, a signal was thrown out for forming the line, but night came on before the ships

* See Gibbon's letter to lord Sheffield, July 1778.

[Indecisive engagement off Ushant.]

were properly stationed. The following morning, the wind being westerly, it was discovered that the French had gained the weather-gage; D'Orvilliers, however, though superior in number, still avoided battle. The British admiral, chasing to windward the three following days, endeavoured to bring on a battle, but in vain. On the 27th, a sudden squall came on, so very thick as to conceal the two fleets from the view of each other. When the weather became clear, it was found that the French fleet had fallen considerably to leeward, and was near the van of the British. Instantly admiral Keppel gave the signal for forming the line; an engagement began, as the fleets were passing each other in contrary directions. At this time the *Victory*, and the other ships of the centre division were nearest to the enemy. Sir Robert Harland being to windward, was ready for immediate service; while sir Hugh Palliser was considerably to leeward with the rear, and out of the line. The French, who were now to leeward, had made an alteration in their movements, which seemed to indicate an intention of cutting off the rear division. The admiral, professing to entertain this apprehension, left the station in which the battle began, and sailed to leeward,* until he was opposite to the enemy's van; while sir Robert Harland, by his orders, covered the rear. Keppel kept a signal constantly flying for Palliser to join the line, but that commander did not arrive. The admiral repeated the signal to sir Hugh Palliser to come to his station: but, before the order was obeyed, darkness prevented the renewal of the contest. The French admiral ranged his fleet so as to appear determined to fight the next morning; but in the night they quitted their station, leaving three frigates with lights at proper intervals, to appear to the British the leading ships of their three divisions. The next morning the French fleet was at so great a distance, that the admiral did not think it expedient to renew the pursuit; it would, he alleged, be impossible to overtake them, and his own ships would be exposed to danger from a lee shore: he therefore desisted from the attempt, and returned to Plymouth.

Though this battle by no means answered the expectations that British experience of nautical valour and skill naturally and reasonably formed, from a conflict between thirty of our ships of the line, and thirty-two of the French, it effected one very important purpose; the French fleet being obliged to go to port to refit, several British fleets of merchantmen from the East and West Indies and the Mediterranean arrived in safety. Impartial examiners very easily perceived that there was a want of concert in the disposition of the fleet on the day of battle. Admiral Keppel, in his letter to the admiralty, expressed himself, in general terms, satisfied with the conduct of officers and men; it, however, soon appeared that he was much dissatisfied with the procedure of Palliser.

Both the French and English fleets went again to sea in the month of August, but did not again meet during this campaign. Considerable captures were made by frigates and privateers on both sides, but the balance of prizes was greatly in favour of Britain. Two Liverpool privateers took a French homeward bound East Indiaman, estimated at 320,000*l.*; and captain Dawson of the *Mentor* took another, valued at 240,000*l.*

* This evolution was afterwards the foundation of one of the principal charges against admiral Keppel; it being represented as wearing the appearance of flight, and thus bringing disgrace on the British flag.

[Depredations of Paul Jones. Mutual criminations of Keppel and Palliser.]

The American privateers, trusting to the alliance with France, came this year to the coast of Europe, and committed various depredations. The most daring commander of these ships was the noted adventurer Paul Jones. This person had been gardener to the earl of Selkirk, at a seat near Kirkcudbright on the southwest coast of Scotland. Leaving his employment abruptly, on account of some umbrage which he had conceived against the family, he had betaken himself to sea, and by professional skill, together with intrepid boldness, arrived at the appointment which he then held. Jones, directing his efforts against the coasts with which he was best acquainted, landed at Whitehaven in Cumberland, and set fire to a ship in the harbour, with the intention of burning the town, but was driven away by the exertions of the inhabitants. From thence he proceeded over Solway Frith to the seat of lord Selkirk, and pillaged the house of all the plate, jewels, and other valuable effects; but though he greatly alarmed the lady and family (his lordship being in London,) no violence was offered to any individual.

Admirals Keppel and Palliser had each numerous partisans; the difference between them, therefore, spread itself through their fleet, the navy, and kingdom. Keppel's supporters alleged, that if Palliser had obeyed the signal, the action must have been general, and the consequence a complete victory to Britain. Palliser's friends asserted, that the admiral lost the moment of victory, when, instead of bearing forward on the enemy with his full force, he moved to leeward, lost the afternoon by that movement, and thus allowed the enemy to escape. To this principal imputation of Mr. Palliser against Mr. Keppel, several other charges were added, that he had formed his line negligently; that he had not made proper dispositions for covering the rear division; that he might have renewed the battle on that afternoon; that the next morning the French fleet was not at so great a distance as to render pursuit unavailing; and that, in short, the admiral had not done his duty.

Whether Mr. Palliser's censure on Mr. Keppel was right or wrong, its ground was his conduct on the 27th and 28th of July, 1778. After that time, the vice-admiral again went to sea under the admiral; delivered him a letter, testifying his majesty's approbation of his conduct; corresponded with him in terms of friendship, and in his letters expressed a very high opinion of his superior disinterestedness and zeal for the service.* This conduct, however, of Mr. Palliser relates only to his sincerity and consistency, but is totally irrelative to the truth or falsehood of the charges. After the fleet returned to harbour for the winter, admiral Keppel was severely censured by ministerial publications, and admiral Palliser by writings favourable to opposition. In a newspaper of the latter class, an anonymous letter was inserted, strongly reprehending sir Hugh Palliser. The vice-admiral, having read this production, applied to Keppel to justify his conduct, and required him for that purpose to sign a statement, which not only would have exculpated Palliser, but criminated himself. The admiral having refused to comply, Palliser published in one of the morning papers a long and particular detail of the action of the 27th of July, together with an introductory letter signed with his name. The performance teemed with censure against the conduct of the commander in chief. After indignant remarks and

* See proceedings of the court-martial on admiral Keppel.

[They are respectively tried and acquitted.]

severe recrimination from Keppel, and reciprocal repetition of invective, the trials of both were ordered.

Admiral Keppel was first tried: the charge consisted of five articles, detailing the objects already narrated. After it had continued from the 7th of January 1779, until the 11th of February, the court not only acquitted the admiral, but declared the charges false, slanderous, and malicious. When the news of the sentence reached London, very general illuminations, instigated by political partisans, took place for two successive nights. The populace was inflamed by a notion very industriously disseminated, that the proceedings against admiral Keppel were at the instance of ministry, in order to screen their own misconduct in furnishing him with an inadequate force. Under this impression the mob committed many outrages on the houses of lord Sandwich, and other ministers.

Palliser, soon after the acquittal of Keppel, demanded a court-martial on himself. The charge against him was not specific, but a general assertion of non-performance of duty; and after a trial which lasted from the 12th of April till the 5th of May, he was acquitted.

CHAP. XXII.

State of public sentiment and opinion at the meeting of parliament.—The nation is disposed to strenuous exertion.—The king's speech intimates dissatisfaction with the events of the campaign.—Strictures of opposition on the employment of Indian savages—appeal to the bishops thereon.—The dispute between Kettel and Palliser is introduced into parliament.—Mr. Fox makes a motion for censuring lord Sandwich—which is negatived.—Disputes arise in the navy between the partisans of the respective admirals.—Mr. Fox's motion for the removal of lord Sandwich.—Inquiry into the conduct of generals Burgoyne and Howe, and admiral lord Howe.—The evidence is at first favourable to sir William Howe.—Testimony of general Robertson and Mr. Galloway unfavourable.—Inquiry abruptly abandoned.—Inquiry into the conduct of Burgoyne—clears his character from specific false aspersions.—Riots in Scotland from enthusiastic zeal against popery—imputed by Mr. Burke to the supineness of ministers.—Rapture with Spain.—Spain evidently the aggressor.—Resolutions and measures of parliament thereon.—Session rises.

THE refusal of the Americans to accept of the proffered terms, their alliance with our ancient enemy, and their incitement of that enemy to join them in effort for the reduction of this country, now estranged from their cause many Britons, who formerly favoured them, and reprobated the conduct of administration. Impartial patriots reasoned, that deficient as ministers might be in the foresight, wisdom and vigour requisite at so arduous a conjuncture, reproach and invective were not the means of enabling them to promote the national advantage; that we were now in a state of difficulty and danger, in which retrospection of causes was much less a subject of inquiry, than the means of extrication. Strenuous exertion was now generally deemed the only sure way of delivering us from war, and enforcing an honourable peace. To promote vigorous efforts, the most effectual means was unanimity. From these considerations, though the number of those who venerated the ability of ministers by no means increased, yet a much greater majority of the nation than before was now disposed to second their efforts.

Parliament met on the 25th of November, 1778. His majesty's speech very clearly, concisely, and justly described the conduct of France: "In the time of profound peace (said the king) without pretence of provocation or colour of complaint, the court of France hath not forborne to disturb the public tranquillity, in violation of the faith of treaties and the general rights of sovereigns; at first, by the clandestine supply of arms and other aid to my revolted subjects in North America; afterwards by avowing openly their support, and entering into formal engagements with the leaders of the rebellion; and, at length, by committing open hostilities and depredations on my faithful subjects, and by an actual invasion of my dominions in America and the West Indies." His majesty did not express himself satisfied with the success of the late campaign, but trusted to future efforts.

Opposition, considering the speech as the production not of the king but of the minister, contended, that in asserting the success had not been

[Strictures of opposition on the employment of Indians]

proportioned to our efforts, it declared a falsehood. The advantages gained were far greater than could be expected from the inferiority of our fleets, and the tardiness of our preparations. The speech regretted the failure of conciliatory measures. These were themselves humiliating to England, and unsatisfying to America: but, notwithstanding its defects and absurdities, the adoption of that scheme could not be said to be wholly useless; it had destroyed every fallacious argument by which ministers had beguiled the nation into the fatal contest with America, for it surrendered all its professed objects. The supporters of ministry justified the past conduct of the war, and the preparation and distribution of the armaments that were employed in the summer. By delaying the departure of admiral Byron, D'Estaing was prevented from joining the Brest fleet, and giving France a decided superiority in the channel. The evacuation of Philadelphia was also, they asserted, a measure of wise policy, from the accession of France to the war: New-York was much more central, nearer to the coast, and fitter for sending re-enforcements to the West-India islands, or wherever they might be wanted. Opposition admitted the propriety of evacuating Philadelphia; but contended that the reasons in which it was founded, demonstrated the folly of the whole system. The army in America was reduced to this alternative, either by retaining its acquisitions to divide and debilitate its own strength, or else to stand exposed to disgrace and mortification, and by retracing its steps, to show the inutility of all its labours. No man could expect to conquer a continent by possessing a single town; therefore, while the nation persisted in carrying on an offensive war in America, whether our army advanced, retreated, or stood still, the effect would be the same, a fruitless, expensive, and cruel, because unnecessary, war. The amendment was rejected by a great majority. Patriotism and wisdom might before have dictated opposition to the ministerial measures respecting America, while there were hopes that by combating the plans of government they might produce a conciliatory change: now, however, the colonists were avowed enemies, and were engaged in a hostile confederacy against Britain; and there was no alternative but victory or submission. If ministry might be justly charged with having brought us, by their ignorance and want of political abilities, into so bloody and expensive a war, opposition did not employ the most efficacious means for procuring a safe and honourable peace. Perpetual invectives against administration were far from tending to depress the enemy, or strengthen the country. Common sense could never consider a regular and uniform system of obstruction to his majesty's councils, as the most effectual mode of promoting the success of his arms.

The chief object of opposition during this session, was to censure the conduct of the war, and to impute all real or alleged miscarriages to the incapacity and infatuation of ministers. On the 4th of December, a motion was made for an address to his majesty concerning the late manifesto of the commissioners, to declare the displeasure of parliament at certain passages of the proclamation, as totally unauthorized by the act of the legislature for appointing these commissioners, and in themselves utterly inconsistent with the humanity and generous courage which at all times distinguished the British nation, subversive of the maxims which have been established among christian and civilized communities, derogatory from the dignity of the crown of this realm, and tending to debase the

[Reply of ministers. Proposed inquiry by general Howe.]

spirit and to subvert the discipline of his majesty's armies. The supporters of the motion interpreted the passages in question in nearly the same manner as the Americans professed to have done, and considered them as replete with denunciations of the most savage barbarity. On this assumption their arguments proceeded, and speakers expatiated on the wickedness and madness of the new kind of warfare, which converted British soldiers into butchers, assassins, and incendiaries, and proposed for the model of civilized Britons the practices of Indian savages. Contrary, they alleged, as the threatened mode of carrying on war was to humanity, it was no less inimical to sound policy, as the colonists could retaliate on the coasts of England, Scotland, and Ireland; and various parts of his majesty's dominions must, by their exposed situation, suffer the most dreadful cruelties from retaliation: on these grounds, they proposed to request that it should be disavowed by his majesty.

To this deduction of consequences, ministers replied, by denying the principle; the proclamation, they contended, denounced no new species of war, no kind of hostilities dissimilar to those which have been usually carried on between belligerent nations in every part of the civilized world. In the former part of the American war, Britain had considered the colonists not as enemies, but as subjects partly rebellious from disposition, but chiefly misled by mischievous counsel: it had therefore been their wish to instruct and persuade, as well as to compel: but now the provincials had thrown themselves into the arms of French enemies, and were henceforth to be treated like any other foes, so as most speedily and effectually to annoy and weaken the hostile cause. This was the amount of the reprehended portion of the manifesto, such was the intention of its framers, such the meaning which its expressions plainly and explicitly conveyed. They could not therefore consent to address his majesty, that he might disavow intimations which instead of censure, deserved the highest approbation. After a very hard contest between the censurers and supporters of this act of the commissioners, an occurrence took place, which appeared to give the former a considerable advantage. Governor Johnstone speaking on the subject, exhibited the irritation of violent passion, much more than the sound vigorous reasoning by which his eloquence was generally distinguished; he declared the manifesto to have meant a desolating war, and justified it in that view as not only right but necessary. Opposition contended, that this avowal by one who had been a commissioner, proved their assertion. Ministers, however, adhered to their rejection of the interpretation. In discussing this question, general Howe, after reprobating the alleged plan of war, deviated from the question, to introduce a charge against the secretary, concerning his conduct to the generals who commanded in America. To the mal-administration of Germaine, Howe imputed his own request to resign his employment, and strongly urged the institution of a parliamentary inquiry, in order that the conduct both of the commanders and ministers should be fully examined, justice done on all sides, and the nation acquainted with the true cause of that failure of success which it had hitherto experienced. The secretary, after expressing his astonishment at the accusation, and vindicating his conduct, declared, that he certainly should not object to an inquiry when regularly proposed, as he was confident it must terminate to his honour. Returning from irrelevant topics to the subject at issue, the house was called for a vote, and the motion was

[Appeal to the bishops.]

negated by a majority of two hundred and nine to two hundred and twenty-two.

When the proclamation was discussed in the house of peers, an appeal was made to the bench of bishops, to exert that charity, humanity, and abhorrence of blood and cruelty which were the leading tenets and distinguishing characteristics of christianity, upon a subject which not only came directly within their cognisance, but in which they seemed bound by their character to exert the peculiar and most exalted principles, of their religion, in preventing the wanton butchery and destruction of mankind. Their interference was required to prevent the destruction and spare the blood, not only of men and christians, but of Englishmen and protestants, like themselves; to crush in the outset an abominable system of warfare, which in its progress and consequences would bring desolation and ruin on their own flocks. The legal powers with which they had been invested by the constitution for such pious purposes, would be found, in the present instance, fully equal to the duty and emergency. They were the moderators, ordained by the wisdom of the constitution, to check the rage, restrain the passions, and control the violence of temporal men. Their simple votes upon this occasion would at once fully express their detestation of the inhuman system; and, joined with those of the secular lords who held the same principles, would cure its effects. The bishops were very far from contesting that it was incumbent on them to exert their abilities and influence for moderating the passions of men, and preventing the wanton effusion of christian blood; but, as the lords in opposition had not proved that efforts against revolted subjects, who were leagued with inveterate enemies, were wanton, and they thought the annoyance of such foes necessary for self-defence, they did not consider themselves as justified in censuring the manifesto.*

Censure of ministry had constituted a considerable part of the proceedings of opposition in the former years of our dispute with the colonies; but the reprehension had been combined with wise legislative propositions for removing the evils of which they complained. During the present session, reproach of administration constituted nearly the sole conduct by which they professed to discharge their duty, as senators deliberating for the good of their country. Every commander, whose success had not answered the expectations formed from the means with which he was supplied, imputed his miscarriages to industry; and, as soon as he made that imputation, was supported by opposition with an eagerness that greatly outstripped the evidence. On the 28th of December, a debate arose in the house of commons, on a proposed vote of seventy thousand seamen for the service of the ensuing year. During the discussion, it was observed by opposition, that as very different representations had been given of the naval proceedings of admiral Keppel's fleet on the 27th and 28th of July, an inquiry ought to be instituted for ascertaining the truth. Preliminary to such investigation, it was proposed, that as both officers, being members of the house, were then present,

* Mr. Belsham, uniformly desirous of throwing out indirect or direct charges against our ecclesiastical establishment, in mentioning a protest that was entered on this occasion, says, "it is painful to remark, that the name of one bishop only, the venerable Shipley of St. Asaph, is to be found in the long and illustrious train of signatures affixed to this memorable protest." This censure of our prelates, Mr. Belsham supports by no proof; it rests entirely upon his own authority.

[Dispute between Keppel and Palliser introduced into parliament.]

one or both of them should afford some satisfaction on the subject. Admiral Keppel, having risen in compliance with this request, made a speech, of which, though some parts were sufficiently intelligible, there were others by no means explicit, and of which the exact import could not well be apprehended from the expressions themselves, though the tendency and intent might be gathered from various circumstances. He affirmed, that on the occasion in question, he had done his utmost against the enemy; the glory of the British flag had not been tarnished in his hands, and were he again in the same situation, he should act in the same manner; but the oldest and most experienced naval officers would discover something in every engagement with which they were before unacquainted, and he acknowledged, that day had presented to him something new. He impeached no man (he said) of a neglect of duty, because he was satisfied the officer who had been alluded to had manifested no want of courage, which was the quality most essential to a British seaman.* All his direct complaints or animadversions were limited to an anonymous letter imputed to that gentleman, and another letter avowed and signed by him, and both published in a newspaper. In the subsequent part of his speech, complaining of the abuse to which he had been exposed in diurnal publications, he said he did not charge ministers with being the authors or promoters of the invectives against him; they, on the contrary, seemed to be his friends, and caressed and smiled upon him: or if any ministers were capable of vilifying and secretly aspersing him, and endeavouring to cut his throat behind his back, *he did not think they were then near him.** Sir Hugh Palliser charged the admiral with dark and indirect insinuations, called on him to state his charges, justified his own conduct, and expressed his wish for a public inquiry; the institution and result of which I have already narrated, as far as concerned the two admirals. Opposition in parliament condemned the admiralty for granting a court-martial at the instance of Palliser. They should (they said) have acted as moderators upon this occasion, given passion time to cool, and interposed their influence in healing the differences between two brave and valuable officers, at a time when their services were so much wanted; instead of which they blew up the flame by precipitately receiving a rash, hasty, and passionate accusation; and thereby drawing on the fatal dissensions in the naval service, and the numerous evils to the public, which they had themselves declared must be inevitable consequences of such a trial. The commissioners of the admiralty strenuously insisted their constitution to be such, that in all matters of accusation they were obliged

* The reader must here see very indefinite expressions, and reasoning by no means conclusive. What the alleged novelty that had occurred in the engagement was, he did not explain, though, without great likelihood of mistake, common sagacity might conjecture what meaning he intended to convey. *He impeached no man of neglect of duty, because the officer alluded to manifested no want of courage.* Though courage be, as he observed, the most essential quality of a seaman, yet it is not his only duty, and there might be grounds of impeachment against an officer who had exerted courage. In fact, admiral Keppel does not disavow the existence of other grounds; but the exclusive admission of that quality tends by a natural construction to insinuate a denial, or, at least, a doubt of the performance of other necessary duties by the individual to whom he alluded.

† Lord Sandwich, first lord of the admiralty, and a member of the other house, being in anti-ministerial works represented as both politically and personally inimical to admiral Keppel, was understood to be meant by this insinuation.

[Thanks of parliament voted to admiral Keppel.]

to act ministerially, they had no judicial power; that, when a complaint was preferred, they were as a matter of course and in discharge of their office, not only compelled to receive it, but to give the necessary direction for the trial.

The vice-admiral had preferred an accusation consisting of five separate articles, or charges, properly drawn up, and specifically pointed. What line of conduct then could the admiralty board pursue? They must either prejudice the truth of those charges, or admit them to be such as were fit to be sent to the consideration of a court-martial. The first they neither could, nor dared to do, being totally ignorant of their truth or falsehood; and with the second they were compelled to comply, because the matter allowed no other alternative. Opposition insisted that the admiralty was not only endued with discretionary powers competent to the purpose, but that the exercise of these was one of their great and principal duties, and among the most useful purposes of their institution. They represented their omission of so important a duty on the present occasion as highly culpable; but, in endeavouring to ascertain the powers of the admiralty, they argued more from their own conception of expediency, than from either statute or usage. The restrictions (they said) by which they pretended to be bound, would establish a principle that must destroy all naval service, and leave every superior officer at the mercy of his inferior. If the whole fleet of England were upon the point of sailing on the most sudden and critical emergency, whether for our immediate defence against invasion, or for the preservation of the most valuable foreign interest, according to this doctrine every petty officer, through folly, malice, or treachery, might prevent the whole design and operation, only by laying some charge against the commander in chief, which would necessarily detain all the principal officers, either as witnesses or judges. From this extraneous discussion, returning to the subject at issue, the house by the previous question dismissed the motion.

During the recess of parliament the admiral's trial began: and on his acquittal, a motion was made in the house of commons, that the thanks of the house should be given to the honourable Augustus Keppel for his distinguished courage, conduct, and ability, in defending the kingdom in the course of the last summer, effectually protecting its trade, and more particularly for his having gloriously upheld the honour of the British flag on the 27th and 28th of July: the proposition was adopted, there being only one dissentient voice. The thanks of the lords, in nearly the same terms were voted in four days after, with every external appearance of the most perfect unanimity. The impartial reader may, perhaps, find a difficulty in comprehending what the acts of Keppel were on the 27th and 28th of July, which drew forth from parliament such testimonies of gratitude; and what essential service the chief naval commander on that memorable occasion rendered to his country. It was very evident that ministers did not conceive such an opinion of his public conduct, as their assent to the vote of thanks might indicate; but as the tide of popularity ran so high in his favour they did not think it prudent to go against the current. This compliance with a proposition of their adversaries, manifestly contrary to their own judgment, was very frequent in lord North's administration; and appeared to arise from a desire of deprecating part of the censure which they so often experienced: an attempt, however, by unjust and unnecessary concessions to prevent obloquy, was an expe-

[Motion of Mr. Fox for censuring lord Sandwich, rejected.]

dient of weakness and timidity, and demonstrated the absence of that firmness with which conscious wisdom and rectitude pursue their purposes. The admiralty informed Keppel, that in consequence of his acquittal he was required to resume his command; but though he complied with the requisition, yet the terms in which it was expressed, manifesting no approbation of his conduct, he soon after asked and received his majesty's leave to resign.

Mr. Fox followed the acquittal of his friend and the thanks of the houses, by a motion for censuring lord Sandwich, intended (he said) as a prelude to another for his removal from office. The alleged ground of censure was, the inadequacy of the force that had been furnished to Keppel: when he sailed with twenty ships of the line, there were thirty sail of the line in Brestwater fit for service. Either ministers did or did not know that fact; if they knew it, it was an act of the highest criminality to commit the fate of this country to so great a disparity of force: on the other hand, if the first lord of the admiralty was ignorant of the state of the French navy, it was an ignorance totally inconsistent with the performance of his official duty. Ministers answered, that there was no evidence of the fact on which this charge was grounded: it appeared from the papers of the captured *Licorne*, that the alleged number was then in a state of preparation, but not that they were actually equipped; and in the conduct of the French it appeared, that they were not then ready for sea: since, though they knew that an English fleet of twenty ships of the line were at sea, they did not leave harbour till a fortnight after. The motion was rejected by a majority of 204 to 170, a difference much smaller than on any question that had occurred respecting the war. Mr. Fox made a second attack, which was directed against the whole of lord Sandwich's administration; stating the objects which ought to have been considered by the naval minister, the expense incurred, and the armament provided, he endeavoured to prove that the expense was sufficient for the attainment of all the objects, but that the force prepared was totally inadequate; on these grounds he moved a vote of censure. Admirals lord Howe and Keppel, by professional statements, and arguments derived from these, supported Mr. Fox's positions. Ministers answered, that the allegations of their opponents were founded in assumptions not supported by facts, and that they could not join in a vote of censure for unsubstantiated charges; on a division, the motion was rejected by a majority of two hundred and forty-six to one hundred and seventy-four.

Great dissensions, originating in the dispute between Keppel and Paliser, were now prevalent in the navy, and very serious apprehensions were entertained of their consequences. A declaration of admiral Keppel in the last debate, that he would not accept of any command under the present ministry, powerfully tended to fan the flame. Several officers of high rank and character immediately quitted the service, or declared they could not act under the present system. The political parties reciprocally accused each other with having caused these discords.

Sir Philip Jennings Clerk, encouraged by the success which his bill for the exclusion of contractors the preceding session obtained in the house of commons, attempted its revival; but he soon found that a great change of opinion had taken place. It was rejected by a majority of 165 to 124. On the 10th of March, Mr. Frederick Montague proposed a bill for grant-

[Bill for the relief of dissenters. Motion of Mr. Fox.]

ing farther relief to protestant dissenting ministers and schoolmasters. The enlightened liberality of the age had, it was said, diminished the legal restrictions upon the Roman catholics, therefore the protestant ministers had a fair claim to partake of legislative indulgence. The extent and bounds of toleration depend entirely on expediency, founded in the nature of the opinions professed, and their practical tendency. In the conduct of the class whose relief was now sought, no objection of either justice or policy could be adduced to prevent it from being granted. In the present state of loss, calamity, and danger, it was necessary to unite the interests and affections of all our countrymen, and to concentrate into one mass all the remaining strength of the empire. Two classes of senators had, as we have seen, opposed former applications of dissenters: the first, from high church doctrines; the second from views of political expediency. In the present instance, the second class, however, was favourable to the bill, which, though violently opposed by members of the first, passed both houses by great majorities, and received the royal assent. The chief object of this session continued to be the discussion of executorial conduct. Admiral Pigot, brother of lord Pigot, late governor of Madras, exhibited an historical detail of the object of his late brother's appointment, his conduct, the treatment which he experienced from the company's servants resisting his execution of the orders of their masters, his sufferings, and consequent death. After calling witnesses to establish his proceedings, he moved an address to his majesty, praying that he would be graciously pleased to give directions to his attorney general to prosecute George Stratton, Henry Brooke, Charles Floyer, and George Mackay, esquires, for ordering the governor and commander in chief, George lord Pigot, to be arrested and confined under a military force; they being returned to England, and now within the jurisdiction of his majesty's courts of Westminster-hall. Mr. Stratton being a member of parliament, and present at this very time, entered into a defence and vindication of his own conduct and that of his colleagues, in which he imputed their proceedings to a necessity arising from the violent and arbitrary acts of lord Pigot; but his arguments made so little impression on the house, that the resolutions were immediately adopted without one dissenting voice. The prosecution took place; each was sentenced to pay a fine of 1000*l.* a very inconsiderable sum to men of immense fortunes, and which could hardly operate as a punishment.

Mr. Fox, on the 19th of April, moved an address to the throne for the dismissal of lord Sandwich from his majesty's service, for misconduct in office. The alleged grounds were the same collectively which had before separately been rejected by the house; Mr. Fox, however, with his usual ingenuity, endeavoured to show that the case was different, between a motion for censure and for removal: the former were judicial inquiries, the present was a deliberative question of expediency. A motion for censure required, in point of justice, a specification and certainty of the offences imputed; a motion for dismissal from employment ought to be adopted, if it was probable that the business of the employer would be better performed by another. The whole of the subject proposed might be proved in a few short questions and answers. Was lord Sandwich equal to the performance of his official duties, with safety and honour to the nation? Has he hitherto done so? What reason is there for supposing that he who has failed in his past duties, shall act more ably for the fu-

[Inquiry into the conduct of General Howe, etc.]

ture? The majority of members did not admit Mr. Fox to have established the alleged unfitness of lord Sandwich, and therefore voted against his removal.

Much censure had been thrown out against general Howe, especially in writings alleged to be patronized by ministers; and it was confidently and vehemently asserted, that, if his conduct had been wise and vigorous, he might have repeatedly terminated the war: Both the Howes strongly urged an inquiry, as the sure means of vindicating their character. Lord North replied, that as government had advanced no charge against the noble brothers, no vindication was necessary, and that ministers had no share in the invectives; but though he did not approve of an inquiry, he would not oppose its institution, and readily agreed to the production of the papers which were wanted for carrying it into effect. In these was included the whole correspondence between the ministers and commanders in America, from Howe's arrival at Boston in 1775, to his departure from Philadelphia in 1778; also the accounts, returns, and other documents, tending to show the state of the army at different periods; the real movements and operations, as well as the different plans of action, which had been proposed, discussed, or concerted by the ministers and generals. Ministers apprehending that their own counsels, and not the conduct of the commanders, was the real object of the scrutiny, proposed that the examination of witnesses should be confined to military subjects; and on the 6th of May, lord Cornwallis, major-general Grey, sir Andrew Snape Hammond, major Montresor, chief engineer, and sir George Osborne, were examined. The result of their evidence was, that the force sent to America was at no time equal to the subjugation of the colonies; that the difficulty chiefly arose from the almost unanimous hostility of the people to the British government, and the natural obstructions of the country, so abounding in woods, rivers, hills, and defiles. Their evidence descending to accounts of particular actions, from which the chief censure of the general had arisen, tended to justify his conduct. General Howe himself endeavoured to prove, that he had uniformly stated to the American minister the utter impossibility of reducing America without a much greater force; that he had accompanied his proposed plan for the campaign of 1777, with a requisition of a re-enforcement of twenty thousand men, or at the least fifteen thousand, as indispensably necessary; that the minister had uniformly supposed the number of loyalists to be much greater than it really was; trusting to their co-operation, he could not be convinced that so great a re-enforcement was wanted, and therefore had not sent a fifth part of the number. Concerning the northern expedition, no concert had been proposed between him and the general of that army, nor did he hear any support was expected from him, until a letter from the secretary, which reached him in the Chesapeake, expressed a hope that he might be able to co-operate with Burgoyne. Ministers perceiving that the evidence adduced was not only intended, but directed to the crimination of themselves, much more than an inquiry into the conduct of the general, proposed to call witnesses on the other side. The chief evidences were major-general Robertson, deputy-governor of New-York, and Mr. Joseph Galloway, an American lawyer, who, after having been a member of the first congress, joined the British army. The testimony of Mr. Robertson rather expressed general disapprobation of sir William Howe's conduct, than advanced particular char-

[Abandonment of the Inquiry.]

ges: Mr. Galloway's accusations, specific and direct, included the various topics of military error or misconduct which had been so repeatedly alleged against the general. But, without questioning the veracity of Mr. Galloway, his competency may be doubted: he was chiefly stating, not facts, but opinions, of which the subject was a detailed series of military operations: and he being no military man, the less authority was due to his judgment. Mr. Galloway made one very extraordinary assertion, that four fifths of the Americans were zealously attached to the British government; if the proportion of loyalists had been really so great, they could have easily overpowered the revolters, without the assistance of one British soldier: so exaggerated an account, manifesting at least glaringly inaccurate observation, very much weakened the credibility of his assertions. Sir William Howe requested leave to call witnesses to controvert Mr. Galloway's asseverations: ministers objected to this mode, as productive of too much delay; he was, however, allowed to cross-examine this witness. A day being fixed for that purpose, and sir William not having attended at the appointed hour, the committee was suddenly dissolved, and the question at issue was left undecided. Opposition had eagerly demanded and prosecuted an inquiry, while the testimony in exculpating the commander tended to criminate ministry; but when the evidence took a different turn, their ardour manifestly subsided. Respecting general Howe, the principal witnesses in his favour were much more competent than the principal witnesses against him: lord Cornwallis and general Grey, military men, spoke concerning actions in which they were themselves engaged; Mr. Galloway, not a military man, spoke from hearsay. It must, however, be observed, that in inquiries concerning *what might have been done*, testimony is necessarily inference, not the result of recollection and veracity, but also of opinion and conjecture. The judgment of the wisest men, concerning subjects in which they are peculiarly skilled, may be warped by their affections. Many other professional men, having considered in detail the force and opportunities of general Howe, drew a totally different conclusion.

Whatever estimate the impartial reader may have formed of the merit of general Howe's exertions, he must immediately perceive, that the inquiries proved ministers to have continued in that state of misinformation and ignorance respecting the sentiments of the Americans, in which their fatal plans and measures originated; and also, that they did not send to America the force which the general required.* Ministers, by patronizing Mr. Galloway, and other accusers of the late commander, demonstrated themselves disposed to promote an opinion of his culpability. If they conceived the late commander not to have discharged his duty, ministers, in not ordering a court-martial to establish the imputed misconduct, neglected their duties to their king and country; if they thought him innocent, it was mean and illiberal in them to favour and pension his revilers;† if he was guilty, they acted weakly and timidly in

* Our immortal war minister, secretary Pitt, after he planned an expedition, and selected an officer to conduct it, immediately asked him, what force he would deem necessary? On being informed, he always ordered a still stronger armament; but different, indeed, was the war minister of 1759, from the war minister of 1777.

† Mr. Galloway, and several others of inferior note, who inveighed against general Howe, received pensions. Galloway's evidence was published in a pamphlet, and circulated with great industry by the friends of administration.

[Inquiry into the conduct of general Burgoyne. Riots in Scotland.]

not bringing forward the proofs. Lord North and his colleagues, however, are exempted from one charge, often adduced against the counsellors who have appointed a commander in chief to conduct an expedition that proves unsuccessful. His military reputation *at the time he received* this last commission, justified the appointment; though there might be persons whose expectations were not fulfilled by general Howe's campaigns, none could with justice at the outset have affirmed that he was a man whose talents and character did not justify reasonable expectations of success.

General Burgoyne also insisted on an inquiry into his conduct. On his return from America the former year, he had applied for a court-martial; which was refused him, on the ground that while he was prisoner his preceding conduct was not cognizable by any tribunal in this country. He had been refused admittance to the sovereign, and complained loudly of the court and ministry; he repeatedly solicited a parliamentary investigation, but Germaine had declared that his request could not be granted until after a military scrutiny, which he affirmed to be at that time impracticable; and when an inquiry was allowed to general Howe, Burgoyne having resumed his solicitation, his requisition was at last agreed to. The principal witnesses were, sir Guy Carleton, the earl of Balcarras, captain Money, the earl of Harrington, major Forbes, captain Bloomfield and colonel Kingston. The evidence tended to overthrow some severe charges and censures which had been insinuated or directed against Burgoyne's conduct, and particularly detected two falsehoods then very commonly believed: first, that general Philips, the evening before the convention of Saratoga, offered to force his way, with a specified part of the army, from Saratoga back to Ticonderoga: secondly, that the late gallant Fraser had expressed the utmost disapprobation of the measure of passing the Hudson's river. The question, however, was undecided, whether his orders for proceeding to Albany were peremptory or conditional: some doubts were also left, respecting both the design and the mode of conducting the expedition to Bennington. These inquisitorial proceedings occupied parliament during the greater part of the session.

Riots, which had arisen in Scotland from groundless apprehensions concerning popery, were, by the ingenuity of opposition, made subjects of accusation against ministry. The Roman catholic bill, that passed during the preceding session, excited great alarms in North Britain, as it was supposed to be the intention of parliament to extend the relief to the Scottish catholics. When the law was enacted in 1778, the general assembly of the church of Scotland happened to be sitting. The well intended but unadvised zeal of some members of that respectable body, proposed for clerical discussion the late act, and made a motion for petitioning the legislature not to extend the bill or any of its provisions to Scotland, and supported the proposition by detailing the common arguments against popery. Mr. Dundas, a lay member of the assembly, showed that the law repealed in England had not originated in fear of popery, and was not intended as a bulwark against its encroachments, but sprang from a design of the jacobite party to render king William and his whig ministers unpopular: that the jacobites expected the whigs would oppose that bill, and intended to impute that opposition to a partiality for the Romish faith; but that the whigs perceiving the object of

[Ireland: Rupture with Spain.]

their adversaries, suffered it to pass, though very inconsistent with their principles of freedom and toleration.* Doctor Robertson, with some able coadjutors of his own order, deprecated the agitation which tended so much to excite the alarm and discontent of the people, and demonstrated the absurdity of anticipating the intention of legislature, by petitioning parliament against a bill not actually proposed. The motion was negatived through the influence of those able and enlightened men, though it produced the effect which their sagacity had apprehended. The populace was soon taught to conceive, that the successful opposition sprang from a predilection for the popish doctrines, and burned with zeal against antichrist. To oppose popery, associations were formed by the lower classes in Glasgow, Edinburgh, and other towns, under the instigation and conduct of fanatical and turbulent demagogues; and the populace rose to tumult and riot in various places. At Edinburgh and Glasgow the enthusiastic spirit fermented to an alarming degree; mobs set fire to popish chapels, and the dwelling houses of the catholics; and many zealots of higher ranks and better opportunities of knowledge, were absurd enough to approve of these outrages, *on the ground that it was proper for the people spiritedly to manifest their hatred of popery.* The sufferers applied to Mr. Burke to present a petition to parliament, praying for a compensation on account of the losses which they had sustained. In promoting this application, Mr. Burke and his friends very strongly attacked the supineness of government, to which they imputed the mad violence of the populace; but they adduced no proof that ministers had been negligent, or that the disturbances had arisen from causes over which they had any control.

Although this session lasted from November to July, and produced more political debate than any during the former part of the contest; yet, long as it continued, and busy as it was, its acts are of very little legislative importance. The affairs of Ireland were again submitted to the consideration of the house, and various proposals were made for affording relief and assistance to the commercial interest of the sister kingdom; but no regular plan was formed respecting the nature or extent of the aid which was to be expected and offered. The discussion was in a considerable degree confined to barren generalities. Several propositions were at length offered, but their practical consideration was deferred to the following session.

On the 17th of June, the ministers brought a message to parliament concerning a hostile manifesto that was presented by the Spanish ambassador. To introduce this properly to the reader, it is necessary to revert to the king of Spain's character and disposition, together with the circumstances of the times. Though nothing could be more contrary to the solid interests of his kingdom than hostilities with Great Britain, yet Charles III. a monarch of weak understanding, narrow views, and the childish irritability of feeble minds, had, as we have seen, from a fancied insult, cherished against England an enmity which a real injury could not have justified when so adverse to the commercial and political benefit of his country. He was farther inflamed by that spirit of rivalry, which, in confined and uncomprehensive understandings, values com-

* The author, who was present, remembers, that Mr. Dundas, to justify his position, read the account of the law from Burnet's History of his own Times

[Spanish manifesto. Bill respecting the militia.]

parative superiority above positive good. He was more anxious to impede the prosperity of England, than to advance the prosperity of Spain. In these causes chiefly originated the actual war and intended hostilities which this history has already recorded. When the present quarrel broke out between France and England, Spain, not yet prepared for the contest, professed a determination to observe a strict neutrality. She had offered her services as a mediator between the belligerent powers, and proposed to mix the separate claims of France and Spain into one view and treaty. On this principle, so strongly and justly reprobated by Mr. Pitt, in the former war, a negotiation was opened. France now proposed an armistice, and a congress to be held at Madrid, whither the colonists should be permitted to send commissioners, and meanwhile be treated as an independent power. Both courts well knew that these terms were totally inadmissible, on the avowed principles of the court of London; the offer was therefore nugatory and insulting. Spain now openly avowed her hostile purposes, and on the 16th of June delivered a manifesto to the British secretary for foreign affairs. The manifesto in its object was nearly the same with those which had been often presented by the courts of Versailles and Madrid; it consisted of charges, without proof, of hostilities committed by England; and praise, contrary to proof, of the moderation and justice of France and Spain. It contained general allegations, of Spanish territories invaded, and Spanish subjects murdered by English, without any specification of the time and place in which the alleged atrocities were committed, or any evidence that they had ever been perpetrated. It stated demands of satisfaction, but adduced no evidence that complaints had ever before been made, or that any injuries existed; it was merely a tissue of assertion without proof; and which neither then, nor ever afterwards, received the slightest support from documents or any other evidence.* As she, by her hostile manifesto, avowing her junction with the enemies and revolted subjects of Great Britain, committed an act of open and flagrant hostility, and brought no proof of any previous hostility on the part of England, SPAIN WAS EVIDENTLY THE AGGRESSOR.†

When the manifesto was laid before parliament, opposition at first professed to join in a resolution to support the war against the house of Bourbon; but, as they descended to detail, their eloquence was as usual directed to the crimination of ministers, much more than the security of their country. Lord North proposed to double the militia; he, however, professedly made his proposition as a subject of disussion and modification. Three opinions were prevalent on this question: one recommended the adoption of the project as it was originally framed: the second preferred a mixed scheme, which, with a small augmentation of the mi-

* See Spanish manifesto in state papers of 1779.

† I herein differ from Mr. Belsham, who asserts that Britain was the aggressor; but as this writer brings no poof of the truth of his assertion, and Spain, by her commencement of hostilities, brought such proof against the assertion, I must, instead of relying on the authority, rest upon the evidence, that not my country but its enemies began the war. I confess, that, though, as an historian, I hold myself bound to narrate the truth, whether favourable or unfavourable to Britain, as a Briton I feel more pleasure in recording its justice, than I should derive from being under the necessity of exhibiting its injustice; and that I have a satisfaction in being convinced these islands did not provoke the confederacy of the great continental powers.

[Supplies. Prorogation of parliament.]

litia, proposed to levy distinct volunteer corps; and the third objected to any increase of the militia, and would trust to the spirit and patriotism of the nobility and gentry in raising forces according to the offers which had been already made, and to the efforts of the people, who would unquestionably come forward to defend their king and country. The bill received such great alterations in the house of lords, as totally to change its original nature, and in that state it passed into a law.

The supplies granted for 1779, amounted to seventy thousand seamen, and thirty thousand three hundred and forty-six soldiers, besides the army in America and the West Indies, which, including foreigners, consisted of about forty thousand. The services of the year were then estimated to require 15,072,654*l*. The land tax and duties upon malt furnished their proportions: seven millions were raised by annuities; and a lottery, consisting of 49,000 tickets, was distributed among the subscribers, in the proportion of seven tickets, at 10*l*. each ticket, for every thousand pounds subscribed.* Lord North said he wanted to have borrowed eight millions, but could procure no more than seven. The whole amount of the money raised by a lottery, was to be distributed into prizes.† The sinking fund furnished 2,071,854*l*. Exchequer bills to the amount of 3,400,000*l*. were voted; and other less considerable articles of revenue completed the ways and means. A vote of credit for a million, was afterwards passed; and the whole navy debt was left undischarged. The terms on which the loan was filled, were, besides the douceur of lottery tickets, three per cent. *per annum*, and an annuity of 3*l*. 15*s*. for the term of twenty-nine years, for every 100*l*. The annual interest payable on the money borrowed amounted to 472,500*l*; to raise which, an additional duty of five per cent. was laid on the full produce of the excise, (beer, ale, soap, candles, and hides excepted,) which was estimated at 282,109*l*.; a tax on post horses of one penny a mile, 164,250*l*.; and an additional duty of five per cent. on cambric, 36,000*l*. Various strictures were made on the profusion of public money, and motions of inquiry and censure were repeatedly proposed, and respectively negatived, by ministerial majorities. The session was closed on the 3d of July, by a speech in which the king expressed his cordial thanks for the exertions of parliament for the public welfare in the various departments of national service. He rejoiced that the courage and constancy of his people rose with the difficulties which they had to encounter; and doubted not, that their efforts would finally prevail against their multiplied enemies.

* History of Britain during lord North's Administration, p. 355. † Ibid.

CHAP. XXIII.

Hostilities in the West Indies.—Superior force of the French.—British, notwithstanding, capture St. Lucie.—Byron sails northwards to escort the mercantile fleet—in his absence D'Estaing captures Dominica, St. Vincent's, and Grenada.—Engagement between the French fleet and Byron's indecisive.—North America.—Expedition to Georgia under colonel Campbell—who reduces the province.—Maitland's battle with Lincoln—impetuous courage of Fraser's highlanders.—D'Estaing, with a large force, arriving in Georgia, invests Savannah.—Memorable defence of that town by the British—the siege is raised.—Clinton continues a war of detachments.—Gallant exploits of the British troops, without any important result.—Europe.—Perilous situation of Britain.—Combined fleet parade in the channel.—English fleet, in imitation of Drake, endeavours to draw their armada to the narrow seas.—Enemy retreat.—France threatens an invasion.—Loyal and patriotic spirit and efforts of all parties to resist the enemy.—Voluntary contributions.—British fleet keeps the seas, and protects our trade.—Investment of Gibraltar.

THE first warlike operations of 1779 were in the West Indies: hostilities, indeed, had commenced there in 1778, but so late in the season, that, not to break the unity of the narrative, I include them in the account of the present year.

A considerable force had been stationed in the French West Indies, under the marquis de Bouillé, who, by a sudden attack, made himself master of the island of Dominica. The success of this enterprise caused a general alarm through the British islands; the defence of which was then intrusted to two ships of the line, under admiral Barrington. A re-enforcement, however, consisting of three ships of the line, three of fifty guns, and three frigates, joined the admiral in the month of December, having on board general Grant, with a large body of land forces. The British armament, with this accession, sailed for St. Lucie, and arrived there on the thirteenth of December. D'Estaing now reached Martinique, and being joined by transports with nine thousand troops on board, conceived the hopes of crushing the small fleet which Barrington commanded, and reducing most of the windward British islands, before admiral Byron could come to their assistance: he threatened Barbadoes, St. Vincent's, Grenada, and Tobago; but learning the unexpected attack that was made upon St. Lucie, he was for the time obliged to derange his plans, and confine himself to defence. On the 17th of December he landed at St. Lucie: the following day, he assailed the British forces; and, though much superior in number, after an obstinate contest, was defeated and obliged to abandon the island, which soon after surrendered to the British arms. On the 6th of January, Byron's fleet arriving at St. Lucie, rendered our forces superior to the French; whereupon D'Estaing now acted on the defensive, and for five months kept himself in harbour within the bay of Fort Royal. Both fleets received re-enforcements during the winter; the English were joined by a squadron of ships under commodore Rowley, and the French by an armament headed by count de Grasse.

[Capture of Grenada, etc. by the French. North America.]

Admiral Byron, on the 6th of June, left St. Lucie, to conduct the merchant ships, which were appointed to assemble at St. Christopher's previously to their departure for England. In the absence of the British fleet, D'Estaing commenced offensive operations: a force, consisting of four thousand and fifty men, under the command of chevalier de Trolong du Romain, sailed from Martinique for St. Vincent's, where they arrived on the 12th of June; they immediately effected a landing, and opened a communication with the Caribbs. The original inhabitants of the island, who considered the British settlers as intruders on their possessions, were ready to join the French. The garrison consisted of three hundred and fifty effective men, besides those who were confined by sickness; with such a handful of men, conceiving defence impracticable, lieutenant-colonel Etherington, the commander of the forces, and Mr. Valentine Morris, the governor of the island, surrendered St. Vincent's on the same terms which had been granted to Dominica. Re-enforced by La Motte Piquette, who arrived with troops and naval stores from Europe, D'Estaing sailed against Grenada, having twenty-six ships of the line, and near ten thousand land forces. The fate of the island was inevitable; but the resolute defence made by lord Macartney, the governor, long protected the settlement, until a hill that commanded the fort being forced, the British leader proposed to capitulate; but the French general having proposed terms unusually hard, the fort and island were necessitated to surrender at discretion. The appearance of the English fleet, consisting of twenty-one ships of the line, though too late to save Grenada, interposed seasonably for the preservation of Tobago, the only possession which remained to England of the islands which were ceded to her at the peace of Paris. A partial engagement followed, in which admiral Barrington, in the Prince of Wales, with the captains Sawyer and Gardner, in the Boyne and Sultan, sustained the whole weight of the French van. The action was indecisive; many of our ships suffered considerable damage, especially in their rigging; and admiral Barrington received a slight wound. The rapidly successive loss of our three valuable islands, had greatly alarmed our remaining West India possessions: but the approach of the hurricanes, added to the loss of men in the last action, repressed any farther attempts of D'Estaing during that season; and he soon after sailed for North America.

The contrivers of a project, which notwithstanding the failure of expected success, they still deem practicable, must rest their hopes of ultimate attainment on a variation of means. Repeated discomfiture did not convince British ministers that the colonies were not to be subdued; still our counsellors conceived they might be reduced through a change of plans, which should be carried into execution by more skilful and vigorous efforts. Alteration of schemes was one of the chief characteristics of the belligerent policy of government during the contest with America, which, in a great measure, was a war of experiments.

The northern provinces had been the first scenes of hostilities, and afterwards the middle states; but the southern colonies, with little interruption, had been exempted from invasion. Overthrow in the north, and inefficiency in the middle, government now hoped would be compensated by victory in the south; thither it was resolved to di-

[State of the southern provinces. Expedition to Georgia.]

rect our efforts, and during the remainder of the conflict, Georgia, the Carolinas, and Virginia, were the principal theatres of active enterprise.

Since, indeed, it was resolved to persevere in the attempted reduction, there were strong reasons for carrying our arms to the southern provinces: these colonies produced the commodities which were most wanted, and most valuable in the European markets. France took off an immense quantity of their staple products, and the quiet and security which they had hitherto enjoyed, admitted so vigorous a cultivation, that their export trade seemed little otherwise affected by the war, than what it suffered from the British cruisers. Thus, in effect, the continental credit in Europe was principally upheld by the southern colonies; and they became the medium through which they received those supplies, that were not only indispensably necessary to the support of the war, but even to the conducting of the common business and affairs of life.* Besides, it was believed that, in the provinces in question, a much greater proportion of the inhabitants was well affected to the British government, than upon trial had been found among their northern countrymen; and ministers, in spite of experience, received those rumours as authentic information. It was therefore resolved to make an essay in the south, and to begin with Georgia. This province, though in itself neither great nor powerful, possessed considerable importance as a granary to the invaders, and a road to farther progress. It was extremely fruitful in rice, and thus could supply provisions to the royalists when at such a distance from their principal magazines; and being contiguous to East Florida, a loyal colony, where general Prevost was stationed with a body of troops, if recovered, would prove a key to the Carolinas. These reasons determined the British to undertake an expedition to Georgia; and towards the close of the preceding year, the undertaking was commenced by a detachment from the main army.

The land force destined to execute this project, consisted of the seventy-first regiment, two battalions of Hessians, and four of North and South Carolina loyalists, with a body of artillery, amounting in all to three thousand five hundred men, under the command of lieutenant-colonel Campbell. Major-general Prevost was ordered to join the expedition from East Florida, and take the command of the whole; but so ably did Campbell form his plans of attack, and so well was he supported by the spirit and bravery of his little army, and the cordial and zealous co-operation of commodore Parker and the naval forces, that the reduction of the province was completed before the arrival of Prevost.

Having left New-York in November, 1778, the British commander arrived, on the 23d of December, at the mouth of the Savannah river, upon which Savannah, the capital of Georgia, is situated, about fifteen miles from the sea. Near the metropolis, but farther down the river, How, the American general, was stationed with several regiments, for the double purpose of opposing the landing of the British, and protecting the town. Not fearing these adversaries, Campbell, on the 29th, disembarked his troops, in the face of the provincial musketry and artillery. The first that reached the land was captain Cameron,

* See Annual Register, 1779, p. 29.

[Defeat of the Americans. Progress of the British army.]

with the light infantry of Fraser's highlanders; the Americans received them with a general volley, by which the captain and a few others were killed. The native courage of the highlanders, by the death of their commander stimulated to revenge, hurried on with a force which numbers in vain endeavoured to oppose, and drove the Americans to the woods. Campbell, pursuing the dismayed foes, overtook them at a post near Savannah, which was so strong as to induce How to risk an engagement. His right was covered by a thick woody swamp, and the houses of a plantation filled with riflemen; his left reached the rice marshes upon the river; the town and fort of Savannah protected the rear; the artillery was disposed advantageously on both sides, and a trench of one hundred yards wide, together with a marshy rivulet, guarded the front. The colonists being somewhat more accessible on the left than in any other situation, there they expected the brunt of the British attack, and thither directed their chief attention and vigilance. The sagacity of Campbell discovered their opinions and views; and farther to encourage their belief, made a feint to send troops in that direction. Meanwhile having discovered a private path on the right of the enemy, he despatched sir-James Baird, with the light troops, to turn the enemy's rear; conducted by a negro through the secret track, Baird accomplished his object and assailed the Americans. Campbell finding that the stratagem had succeeded, now bore on the enemy in front. Thus surrounded, the provincials were completely defeated and routed, with the loss of four hundred men, while only seven of the British fell. This victory decided the fate of Savannah, which yielded without farther struggle; all Lower Georgia followed its example; and a great majority of the inhabitants not only abstained from resistance, but even took the oath of allegiance. The next care of Campbell was to form regulations for the tranquillity and government of the province; which duty he effected with great policy and ability.* He now resolved to prosecute his success by an expedition into Upper Georgia, where many were said to be well disposed towards the British government, and only to wait for the support of the king's troops, that they might with safety declare their attachment. The march of Campbell, therefore, into the inland country had a double object; to establish a communication with the loyalists, and to reduce the remaining part of Georgia. Augusta, the second town of the province, lies upon the southern bank of the river Savannah, and is distant from the sea-coast about one hundred and fifty miles. The previous arrangements necessary for marching through such an extent of country, in many places thinly, and in some not at all inhabited, were so well adjusted by lieutenant-colonel Campbell, that he met with few interruptions, except such as arose from the water courses in his way, the bridges over which were in most places destroyed. Upon his approach to Augusta, a body of provincials, under the command of brigadier-general Williamson, quitted the town, and retreated across the river.† From Augusta, Campbell despatched lieutenant-colonel Hamilton towards the frontiers of Carolina, to encourage the loyalists by assurances of protection.

Alarmed by the rapid advances of the royal troops, the provincials made dispositions for arresting their progress. General Lincoln, com-

* See Stedman, vol. ii. p. 79. † Stedman, vol. ii. p. 106.

[Repulse of general Lincoln. Bravery of the Highlanders.]

mander of the Americans in the south, soon arrived on the northern bank with a great and increasing force. Campbell, not finding Augusta tenable, retreated down to Savannah: while Lincoln marched along the northern banks, with a view to cross the river and re-conquer Georgia. While Lincoln was thus engaged, general Prevost conceived hopes of surprising Charleston: on the 10th of May, accordingly, the British troops reached Astley's Ferry in the evening, and having passed the river, appeared before Charleston the following day. On the 12th the town was summoned to surrender, but to no purpose. The general having viewed the lines, was convinced that, though unfinished, they were not to be forced without a loss of men which he could not spare. He knew that the garrison was more numerous than his troops, and that general Lincoln, having heard of his advance, was hastening to its relief from the back country with a numerous army; he therefore retired towards Georgia, took possession of John's Island, a place separated from the main by a small inlet from the sea, and posted himself, until the arrival of ammunition expected from New-York. Hearing that Lincoln was advancing to Lower Georgia, he departed for Savannah, in order to place the fort in the best possible condition of defence; and left to colonel Maitland the command of John's Island, with a garrison consisting of the first battalion of the seventy-first regiment, much weakened and reduced in its numbers, a corps of Hessians, part of the North and South Carolina loyalists, and a detachment of artillery, amounting to about eight hundred men fit for duty. General Lincoln, apprised that the garrison was in a weak state, projected to cut it off; and on the 20th of June, he advanced against this handful, with about five thousand men. An attack on the British piquets first gave the alarm; on which colonel Maitland immediately ordering his soldiers to arms, despatched two companies of Highlanders to observe the motions of the enemy, until he should come up himself with his whole force. The impetuous valour of those brave mountaineers hurried them on too far, and their indignant courage forbade them to retreat, when surrounded by superior numbers: falling in with the left wing of the provincials, they commenced an attack against ten times their own force, and maintained the contest until all their officers* were either killed or wounded; of the two companies, only eleven made good their retreat.† This partial success emboldened the Americans to attack the British lines, and a regiment of Hessians, overborne with the provincial force, had given way, and were communicating their confusion to the rest of our troops, when the remaining companies of the Highlanders, by a movement equally judicious, bold, and rapid, stayed the progress of the American army, avenged the cause of their fallen countrymen, and gave a decisive turn to the fortune of the day. The heroism diffused itself over the British troops: the skill of colonel Maitland seized the happy moment, rallied the retreating Hessians, and repel-

* Among the slain was their brave commander, captain Charles Campbell, the eldest son and heir of the house of Ardchattan in Argyleshire, a youth whom the writer recollects as a class-fellow at St. Andrew's college, and of high promise. His conduct, during four campaigns in America, acquired him great military reputation, which he was rapidly increasing, when, in the 24th year of his age, he fell fighting for his king and country.

† See Stedman, vol. ii. p. 117.

[Siege of Savannah. Memorable defence by the British.]

ed and routed the enemy. The Americans, dispirited by so unsuccessful an attack, attempted no farther offensive operations until the unexpected arrival of D'Estaing re-animated their hopes of expelling the English from Lower Georgia. Informed of the coming of so powerful an auxiliary, Lincoln marched to join the French forces. Prevost appeared for the defence of Savannah, and despatched orders to colonel Maitland to repair thither with all possible haste; old fortifications were strengthened, and new works constructed, under the direction of a masterly engineer, captain Moncrief. D'Estaing having landed his troops without waiting for the Americans, in terms of the most boasting bravado, and illiberal insolence, summoned the British general to surrender. Despising the gasconade, Prevost considered how he might gain time until the arrival of colonel Maitland; he therefore sent a civil answer, desiring a truce for twenty-four hours. The Frenchman, in the confidence of vanity, doubted not that a surrender would be determined, and that the period wanted was for the purpose of drawing up propositions of capitulation; he therefore complied with the request. Meanwhile, colonel Maitland, having marched with astonishing rapidity, reached Savannah; and thus re-enforced, the general notified his resolution to defend the place to the last extremity. Lincoln being now arrived, the combined armies made dispositions for carrying on the siege; ground was broken on the 23d of September, and the British interrupted the operations by several successful sallies. On the 4th of October, the batteries of the besiegers being opened, a request was made by general Prevost, that the women and children might be permitted to leave the town, and embark on board vessels in the river, which should be placed under the protection of the count D'Estaing, and await the issue of the siege. This request, so agreeable to humanity, was refused in terms of insulting rudeness; which showed that the French commander, having long proved himself destitute of the honour,* was no less deficient in the manners, of a gentleman, and that dereliction of integrity often brings along with it a disregard for the decencies and proprieties of civilized life. On the morning of the 9th, D'Estaing made an attack upon the British lines; two feigned assaults were intended to draw the attention of the besieged to the centre and left, while, in two columns, the main body turning the right of the British, should attack the rear. The operations began before day-light: fortunately, one of the enemy's columns mistaking its way in the darkness, was entangled in a swamp adjoining the fortress, and exposed to the fire of the British batteries. Morning having discovered this division not yet extricated from the morass, the British commenced immediately so hot a fire, as not only to prevent the enemy from turning the rear, but even from forming, and destroyed numbers of their men. Meanwhile D'Estaing himself, with the other column, advanced against a redoubt which served as an outwork for the garrison; the combat became extremely fierce and desperate; for a few minutes a French and American standard was planted on a parapet. The contest for the possession of the redoubt was long maintained by both sides; when lieutenant colonel Maitland, seizing the critical moment, ordered the grenadiers of the sixtieth regiment, with the marines, to move forward, and

* He had broken his parole in a former war.

[Siege raised. Clinton continues his plan of predatory warfare.]

charge the enemy's column, already staggering, under the obstinate resistance at the redoubt, and the slaughter which had been made by the artillery from the different batteries, as well as from the *Germaine* armed brig. This well-timed movement decided the fate of the attack: the assailants were repulsed, driven out of the ditch of the redoubt, and routed with redoubled slaughter, leaving behind them, in killed and wounded, six hundred and thirty-seven of the French troops, and two hundred and sixty-four of the Americans. The issue of this battle determined the siege; the allies separated; the Americans retreated to South Carolina, and the French returned to their ships. Soon after their embarkation, their fleet was dispersed by a storm; D'Estaing, with part of the ships, sailed for France, and the rest returned to the West Indies.

In the northern provinces, the war this year was carried on in partial and detached expeditions, but productive of no important event. Sir George Collier, who succeeded admiral Gambier in the command of the fleet, had been employed on the coast of Nova Scotia; there, by his activity, enterprise, and vigilance, he had destroyed numbers of American privateers, which harassed the coasting trade of the colonists, and protected the British commerce to Canada and Nova Scotia, and the Newfoundland fisheries. For his services in the station being promoted to a higher employment, he repaired to New-York; there sir Henry Clinton and he concerted an expedition to Virginia; not with any hopes of making a permanent impression on that central and valuable province, but with a view to impair resources from which the enemy were principally supplied. By the exports of tobacco from the Chesapeake, the credit of congress with foreign nations was chiefly, if not wholly supported; and, by the inland navigation of that bay, large quantities of salt provisions, the produce both of Virginia and North Carolina, were conveyed to the middle colonies for the subsistence of the American army. A detachment under general Matthew, consisting of eighteen hundred men, accompanied by sir George Collier with a ship of the line and four sloops of war, made a descent upon Virginia, burnt the town of Suffolk, took or destroyed an immense quantity of provisions and stores at Gosport and other parts of the coast at Portsmouth, and a great number of merchant ships belonging either to the Americans or their new allies, amounting in all to one hundred and thirty-seven. Having thus annoyed our enemies and acquired a considerable booty, the armament returned to New-York.* General Clinton attacked Verplank's creek and Stony Point, two important posts on the Hudson river, commanding the passage at King's Ferry, which was the most direct and convenient course of communication between the northern and middle colonies. On the approach of the British troops, the forts were abandoned: major-general Tryon and sir George Collier undertook an expedition against Connecticut, which, abounding in men and provisions, was a great support to the American army; they successively reduced the several towns, took or destroyed the provisions, ammunition, stores, artillery, and ships, but respected private property as much as possible, and treated the provin-

* Mr. Belsham, in his narrative, disapproves of these expeditions as inconsistent with humanity; as if it were contrary to humanity to impair in an enemy the means of doing us hurt.

[Enterprises of the Americans. Result of the campaign.]

cials with meritorious lenity.* General Tryon and admiral Collier now proceeded to relieve Penobscot, wherein general Maclean, with a detachment of about six hundred and fifty British, had established a post, in order to check the incursions of the provincials to Nova Scotia. The Americans attempted to surprise this fort, but finding the British prepared for their reception, made dispositions for a regular siege. On the 12th of August, Maclean learned that the next day an assault was intended. On the 13th, however, no attack was made. On the 14th, the garrison early in the morning discovered, to their great surprise, that the enemy had evacuated their works, and in the course of the day found the reason of their departure, in the approach of Collier's squadron. The American ships were taken or burnt; the soldiers and sailors endeavoured to save themselves by flight, but many of them died of fatigue. Collier on returning to New-York, was superseded by admiral Arbuthnot, and soon afterwards embarked for England. The Americans surprised Stoney Point some weeks after its capture, and having taken the fortress by surprise, behaved with the most laudable humanity to the prisoners; but on the approach of a British detachment, again evacuated the garrison. They also made an attempt on Powles hook, a British post on the Jersey shore, opposite to New-York; Lee an American major, had learned that a party from the garrison had gone up the country to forage. Advancing at night with three hundred men to the gate, he was mistaken by the sentinel for the officer who commanded the foraging party, and being by that means suffered to pass with his detachment, seized two redoubts. Major Sutherland, commander of the post, being alarmed, called together sixty Hessians, whose vigorous onset compelled the provincials to retire, with about forty prisoners: their retreat was by military men reckoned extremely precipitate.

General Clinton, informed of the arrival of D'Estaing in Georgia, and apprehending a descent upon New-York, withdrew his troops from Rhode Island and other detached posts: and concentrating his forces, acted on the defensive for the rest of the campaign. Such, in this campaign, were the exploits of Clinton's forces, whose efforts and achievements bore fresh testimony to British valour, but produced no important results. Through all our exertions, no progress was made towards the attainment of the object.

A war of devastation was carried on between the Americans and Indians; in which, though the former were most frequently superior, they by no means subjugated their enemies.

The Spaniards this year conquered West Florida, and entirely expelled the British from the Mississippi trade. To compensate this loss, commodore Lutterel and captain Dalrymple captured Fort Omoa, wherein they found two register ships, estimated at 640,000*l.* with about a fifth more in other plunder. France made a successful expedition to the coast of Africa, with a strong squadron destined afterwards to re-enforce D'Estaing in the West Indies. The British forts, settlements, and factories, at Senegal, on the Gambia, and other parts of the coast, being totally incapable of resisting, each were successively taken.

From distant regions we now return to Europe, wherein the combined force of the house of Bourbon was exerted to overpower Great Britain on her own element, but was exerted in vain.

* See Stedman, vol. ii. p. 143.

[Perilous situation of Great Britain. Combined fleet in the channel.]

Unwise as Spain manifested herself, in seeking a contest with England, she had dexterously timed her avowal of hostile intentions: she had suspended her declaration until the arrival of her annual treasures from her dominions in America, and until she was able to join the French fleet in Europe. On the 12th of June, the armament of France sailed from Brest towards the coast of Spain; on the 16th, the Spanish minister had, as we have seen, delivered the manifesto; and, on the 24th of the same month, the Spanish fleet joined the French.

The situation of England at this time appeared peculiarly perilous. She had formerly coped with the house of Bourbon, but had not been obliged to encounter its undivided strength. Her continental allies, by employing a considerable part of the land efforts of our enemies, had prevented their principal exertions from being directed to maritime operations. It had been often objected to her statesmen, that they too ambitiously courted foreign confederacies; her ministers were now censured for their total avoidance of continental connexions. She had now to stand alone against the Bourbon force, joined to her own revolted subjects; and while a great part of her power was employed against her ancient colonies, a naval armament in multitude of men, number, and size of ships, unprecedented in maritime history, prepared to bear down upon the remainder. Foreign nations, seeing her in such circumstances, considered her ruin as fast approaching: but the event soon showed, that however unwise it may be in Britain entirely to renounce alliances with European neighbours, yet in herself, in the resources of her own industry, ability, and spirit, she possesses the means of repelling every attempt of her enemies; gigantic as were the efforts they did not avail.

Before the commencement of the chief naval operations, a squadron of French made an attempt upon the island of Jersey. This attack, though easily repulsed, produced important consequences. Admiral Arbuthnot, on the 2d of May, was proceeding down the channel with a re-enforcement of troops, and a large supply of provisions and stores, to join sir Henry Clinton, when he received intelligence that the French were in Jersey; and, leaving his convoy at Torbay, he with his squadron hastened to the relief of the island. This laudable movement, though executed as rapidly as possible, besides being the cause of considerable delay in his own voyage, interfered with our plan for the naval campaign in Europe. It being apprehended, that as the season was advancing, the Brest fleet might be out, and attempt to intercept so valuable a convoy, ten ships of the line, under admiral Darby, were despatched from the channel fleet to conduct Arbuthnot beyond all probable danger. Our principal armament, which had been intended to block up the French in Brest harbour, to prevent its junction with the Spaniards, was deemed inadequate to the service, until it should be rejoined by Darby. During this interval, the two fleets of our enemies were enabled to meet: when united, they amounted to more than sixty ships of the line, with nearly an equal number of frigates; and soon after their junction, this formidable armada steered towards the British coasts. Sir Charles Hardy, with thirty-eight sail of the line and a smaller proportion of frigates, was cruising in the chops of the channel, when the combined fleet passed him considerably to the eastward, about the middle of August, and proceeded as far as Plymouth. The enemy in their way took the *Ardeur*, a ship of the line that was sailing to join the British admiral. They made no at-

[Threatened invasion by the French. Patriotism of all parties.]

tempt to land, but continued in sight of Plymouth several days. After having paraded there to the great alarm of the people, a strong easterly gale drove them out to the ocean: they ranged about the lands-end, Scilly islands, and adjacent parts, till the end of the month. On the 31st of August, sir Charles Hardy entered the channel in sight of the combined fleet, which made no attempt to oppose his passage. The British admiral, like his renowned predecessor Drake in similar circumstances, endeavoured to entice the enemy into the narrow seas, where they could not have sufficiently expanded their force: but perhaps dreading the fate of the former armada, when it presumed to brave England on her own element, they retired. The enemy accompanied this ostentatious exhibition of their fleet, with threats of an invasion by a powerful army. The northern provinces of France were every where in motion; forces were marched down to the coasts of Normandy and Brittany; the ports in the bay and in the channel were crowded with shipping; and the general and principal officers were named by the king to command and act in a grand intended expedition. The British government, with suitable vigilance and activity, prepared to defeat the expected attack. Numerous cruisers were stationed in the channel, to watch the enemy's motions; the militia were embodied: they and the regular troops marched to our southern coasts, and cattle, horses, and whatever else could be conveniently moved, were, by a proclamation, driven into the interior country. The prospect of such danger roused the national spirit; party disputes were by the bulk of the people for a time forgotten; they no longer inquired whether North or Fox would make the ablest minister, but agreed in thinking that Britain, an independent and free state, was happier, than she could be as the dependent province of an arbitrary monarchy. These thoughts, and the consequent sentiments, animated every loyal and patriotic heart. Public bodies and private individuals made voluntary contributions to raise men for the defence of their king and country. But our exertions were not confined to defence: while this mighty armament hovered over our coasts, a squadron of ships, under commodore Johnstone, alarmed the opposite shores of France; our cruisers and privateers annoyed the trade of our enemies; our own rich mercantile fleets from the East and West Indies came safe into harbour, while the Bourbon armament was at sea. The combined host returned to Br st harbour, where the bad state of their ships and sickness of their crews, confined them to port for the rest of the campaign. Thus the approach of this immense equipment, and the threatened invasion, proved mere empty bravadoes. Sir Charles Hardy continued till the beginning of November, to cruise with his fleet. In spite of her combined enemies, Britannia still ruled the waves. The only commercial fleet that was in any danger, owed its peril to a private adventurer. Paul Jones, in the end of July, sailed with a squadron, consisting of a forty gun ship, a frigate of thirty-six and another of thirty-two guns, a brig of twelve guns, and a cutter, from port L'Orient, to intercept our homeward bound fleet from the Baltic. These merchantmen were under the convoy of the *Serapis*, of forty-four guns, captain Pierson, and the *Countess of Scarborough* of twenty guns, captain Percy. On the twenty-third of September, captain Pierson having discovered the enemy off Scarborough made signal to the convoy to run ashore as soon as possible; and when near enough to perceive the superior force of the enemy, sum-

[Capture of the *Serapis*. Investment of Gibraltar.]

moned the other frigate to his side. Jones, trusting to the numbers of his men and guns, offered battle; being within musket shot, he attacked the *Serapis*, and attempted to board her, but was repulsed. Captain Pierson, after gallantly maintaining the contest for a long time against the two largest ships of the enemy, at length seeing no hopes of success, in mercy to his men struck his colours. Percy with his twenty gun ship, made a no less valiant defence against Jones's frigate of thirty-two, but was compelled to strike. The loss of the British in killed and wounded was great; but that of the enemy much greater. Jones's own ship was so greatly damaged, that she sunk two days afterwards. In this engagement, two of the king's ships were lost; but their resistance saved the whole convoy, which escaped into different harbours.

One of the principal objects of Spain was Gibraltar; accordingly preparations were early made for proceeding against that fortress. Aware of the natural strength of the place, of the number and valour of its defenders, lately re-enforced with troops, and supplied with ammunition and stores, the Spaniards saw that a siege would be impracticable, and that the only means of reduction was blockade: they therefore, in July, invested it by sea and land, but made no impression during the first campaign.

CHAP. XXIV.

Character of a statesman.—General view of lord North's administration.—Arduous struggle in which Britain was engaged.—Her resources grow from her calls.—Her efforts rise with her difficulties.—Meeting of parliament.—The king's speech.—Extraordinary amendment proposed to the address.—Views of opposition.—Plan of systematic attack on ministers, under three general heads—to be respectively carried on under the conduct of Messrs. Burke, Fox, and Dunning.—State of Ireland.—Alarming associations.—Lord North's plan for affording them satisfaction.—Bills passed for that purpose.—Motions in the house of peers by the duke of Richmond and earl Shelburne respecting the profusion of public money.—Petitions by Yorkshire and London.—Mr. Burke undertakes the cause of public economy.—Celebrated bill of reform.—Motions respecting the increasing influence of the crown.—Increasing spirit of popular association.—Incident which damped that spirit.—Protestant society—extends from Scotland to England.—Lord George Gordon becomes an enthusiast against popery.—president of the protestant society.—Petition to parliament for a repeal of the tolerant law.—supported by an immense multitude that surround the parliament house.—Firm and manly conduct of the legislature.—Dreadful riots in London.—Numerous conflagrations.—tremendous aspect of the burning metropolis.—prisons broken open.—bank threatened.—attempt to cut the pipes of the new river.—military re-enforcements arrive.—at length prove victorious.—insurrection crushed.—tranquillity restored.—loud complaints against the lord-mayor.—Parliament resumes its functions.—Supplies.—Session rises.—Parliament dissolved.

AMONG the various considerations that enter into our estimates of the conduct and character of statesmen, there are two to which we may safely resort as just tests of executorial ability: the first is general and comprehensive, and depends on the principles which direct their thoughts and actions; the second is particular, and modified by the existing case. The former of these tests consists in the nature and tendency of the objects pursued, and means employed in the whole system of their policy, according to the fitness of which we are enabled to characterize their administration as a series; the latter in the nature and tendency of specific ends and measures, which relate merely to the circumstances of the time: according to the choice and adaptation of these, we appreciate any given part of an administration. It would be erroneous and feeble reasoning, to infer, from the want of one species of talent, the absence of every other. There have been ministers, to whose proceedings we could not apply the first of these standards, as they were evidently guided by no fixed principles of political science, and directed to no determinate objects of pursuit, or concerted plan of conduct, whose actions have been isolated experiments for extrication from special difficulties, and not the result of any systematic policy for general security against evil, or for the advancement of good. Though such men could not be consummate statesmen, yet might they exert, in the invention of expedients, very considerable ingenuity. In reviewing the policy of the successive counselors concerned in our disputes with America, and considering the value of the objects, and the efficacy of the means, an attempt to discover grand, comprehensive, and beneficially practicable principles and schemes

[General view of lord North's administration. Parliament.]

would be vain. Ministers had reasoned and acted as political empirics, and had even evinced themselves deficient in the limited experience to which an empiric trusts. Their proceedings not only proved them devoid of political wisdom, but of common information on very obvious cases, which it behoved them to have thoroughly investigated. It is easy to see that combined wisdom and magnanimity might have avoided the American war; by abstaining from imposts less productive, than advantages which were enjoyed before their enactment; by concession, when more profitable than coercion; by voluntary grants, more glorious than attempts to exact; or if conciliatory offers of renewed intercourse availed nothing, by rather totally abandoning the object, than persisting in it through means to which the value of the end was so little proportionate. By not preventing the American contest, the British government afforded an opportunity for the Bourbon ambition to bring on the French and Spanish wars; and thus far a retrospect of ministerial conduct justified a conclusion, that their policy was, in its nature, feeble, inconsistent; and unwise, and in its effect prejudicial to the country; but when we trace their counsels and measures after we were actually involved in those evils, we find that it frequently possessed the secondary merit of lessening the evils which had been produced by themselves. In the late campaign, the most threatening which Britain had ever experienced, the preparations of ministers had warded off the dangers: the resistance of Great Britain to a mighty combination, filled European spectators with astonishment and respect: her resources seemed to grow with her necessities, and in no part of the world was her naval or military glory obscured. If many considered ministers as the ultimate authors of our miseries, yet not a few of these admitted their recent exertions for defending the country to have been powerful; and in viewing our actual situation, great numbers either overlooked or forgot the cause. Resentment and indignation against our enemies, absorbed all thoughts of the impolicy which had enabled their malignity to operate. Patriotism called aloud, Let us punish our foes, and defend ourselves; and prudence said, Reflections on the causes of our state are now too late, our first care ought to be, to discover the means of extrication from our difficulties. Such were the sentiments which prevailed in Britain; and if they implied no strong approbation of ministers, they contained at least little new reprehension. During the recess of parliament, some partial changes took place in the ministry: the earl of Gower, lord president of the council, resigned that high office, and was succeeded by the earl of Bathurst; the earl of Hillsborough was appointed secretary of state for the southern department, in the room of lord Weymouth; lord Stormont for the northern, lately occupied by lord Suffolk: but the three chief ministers who presided over the treasury, American and naval affairs, continued to hold their offices.

Parliament met on the 25th of November. The speech from the throne observed, that we were called upon by every principle of duty, and every consideration of interest, to exert our united efforts in the support and defence of our country, attacked by an unjust and unprovoked war, and contending with one of the most dangerous confederacies that ever was formed against the crown and people of Great Britain. Here our king presented a description of his subjects, which was applicable to loyal, patriotic, and magnanimous Britons, then, and in all ages. "I know

[Plan of systematic attack upon ministers.]

the character of my brave people ; the menaces of their enemies, and the approach of danger, have no other effect on their minds, but to animate their courage, and to call forth that national spirit, which has so often checked and defeated the projects of ambition and injustice, and enabled the British fleets and armies to protect their country, to vindicate their rights, and at the same time to uphold and preserve the liberties of Europe." In exhorting his parliament to persevere in such efforts as would maintain the defence and security, and promote the common strength, wealth, and interest of all his dominions, he particularly recommended to their deliberations the state of Ireland.

An amendment of a very extraordinary nature was moved to the address ; its purport was, to contrast the situation of this country when his majesty ascended the throne, with its present state when the twentieth year of his reign had commenced ; and in a very copious and minute detail, which included the principal events of the reign, it professed to exhibit the outset, progress, and result, and represented our condition as then prosperous, but now adverse ; the prospect as then splendid, but now gloomy ; imputing the alleged alteration to a change in the plans of government, it proposed to leave the new, and return to the old system. Presenting to the sovereign a dismal picture of his dominions, it declared that, in the opinion of its proposers, parliament would betray both their king and country, if they did not distinctly state to his majesty, that nothing but new counsels and new counsellors could prevent the consummation of public ruin. In this projected remonstrance, the members of opposition departed from the tone which they had usually assumed, and demonstrated that they had now framed a much more general plan of operations, than in any of their former hostilities against ministers. They perceived that the public, in contemplating existing situations, began to forget the series of past events ; and to recall these to the minds of the people, seems to have been the chief object of the proposition which they now offered to parliament. Never was more ability displayed by any parliamentary opposition, than in the plan of the minority this session ; or more judgment, than in distributing the parts of the execution according to the talents of the principal leaders. They undertook to prove, first in general principle, and afterwards in detail, that the system of government was radically, and completely wrong ; and that a total change was necessary for the salvation of the country. The changes were proposed to take place in three different departments, economical, constitutional, and executorial. The expanded and philosophical mind of Burke was employed in grand schemes of political economy, so much the subject of analysis and deduction, since the publication of Smith's profound work ; and of practical comparison, from the exertions of Neckar in the neighbouring kingdom. The preservation of the constitution, and the correction of alleged abuses in that admirable system, was the province assigned to him, whose vigorous and acute mind, enriched with legal knowledge, sharpened by forensic contention, and enlarged by senatorial deliberation, had chosen for its principal object the support of constitutional law and practice : to watch the balance of the orders, to correct the preponderancy in either scale, was the task assigned to Mr. Dunning ; while the powerful and comprehensive genius, the penetrating sagacity, the bold and intrepid spirit, the luminous, forcible, and impressive eloquence of Mr. Fox, were employed on the executorial conduct

[State of Ireland. Alarming associations.]

of ministers. The efforts, therefore, of opposition, besides various and separate objects of attack, were this session principally directed to political economy, the balance of the constitution, and the conduct of administration, under three distinguished leaders respectively, Messrs. Burke, Dunning, and Fox. The speeches in support of the amendment, contained outlines of proceedings, which occupied them during the session. After exhibiting the present reign in an historical series to the commencement of the preceding campaign, they went over the various operations, and endeavoured to demonstrate, that, in the whole, and every part of their conduct, ministers had showed themselves totally unfit for their offices. This preliminary debate equalled the highest oratorical efforts which had ever been employed in the British senate; but its result was unfavourable to the ablest speakers; opposition were outvoted by a majority of two hundred and thirty-three to one hundred and thirty-four in the house of commons, and eighty to forty-one in the house of lords.

After the preliminary contention, the first object of opposition was the state of Ireland. It was understood, that during the recess a plan was to have been formed for giving our fellow-subjects such satisfaction as might equally conduce to the welfare of the sister kingdom and Britain. Members of opposition now censured ministers for not having taken effectual steps to satisfy the Irish nation. They drew a melancholy picture of the condition of Ireland, before its first application to the British parliament in 1778: they described the sentiments disappointment had excited in that kingdom, and the subsequent proceedings which had resulted from calamity and discontent. Separated from the exaggerations of orators, the following was the actual state of affairs: associations against the purchase and use of British manufactures, and for the encouragement, in every possible degree, of their own, had already taken place. At first these had only been partial, but now they were become universal, and the non-importation and non-consumption agreements included the usual penalties or denunciations of vengeance, not only against violators, but against those importers or sellers of the prohibited commodities who had not acceded to the general compact: to these had been joined associations of a very different nature, and to the apprehensions already described had been lately added the imminent danger of foreign invasion; a measure which was evidently intended, if not absolutely avowed, by France; and this situation was the more alarming, as the military force supported by Ireland had been continually drained off and weakened by the American war. In order to provide for their defence, they said it must be placed in those who were the most deeply interested in its success. The state was unable, or unwilling to defend them effectually; and the mode of defence, which was unequal to their protection, might be ruinous to their liberties. Military societies were renewed, and their spirit became universal. They declared that they were designed for the double purpose of defending their safety against foreign enemies, and their rights against domestic injustice: They affirmed that they were loyal to the king, and affectionate to Britain; but that it was with the loyalty and affection consistent with their own liberty and prosperity. In every part of the kingdom were seen to arise, as it were by magic, vast bodies of citizens serving at their own charges, choosing their own officers, who had been trained to great expertness, and obeying with exemplary regularity and steadiness. No nobleman or gentleman could

[Defence of ministers. Plan of lord North for the relief of Ireland.]

show his face in the country, who did not fall in (which they did generally, and for the most part cheerfully) with the prevalent disposition of the inferior and middling classes of their countrymen. After having provided for their defence against foreign enemies,* the Irish began to look towards their rights, or claims of rights, and in general declared the authority of the British parliament over them to be a flagrant usurpation. This state of things was not the work of a party, or of any particular set of men, but was produced and upheld by every rank, class and denomination of people. A free and unlimited commerce with the whole world was the first, the great, and general object of redress, for which no compensation could be admitted, and without which no other concessions or advantages, however great and beneficial, could afford satisfaction. This was the *sine qua non*, from which there was no departure. Such was the state of affairs in Ireland; and during the recess of the British parliament, the Irish lawgivers showed themselves inspired with the spirit of the nation. They declared in their addresses to the throne, that nothing less than a free and unlimited trade could save the country from ruin. From these facts opposition in both houses endeavoured to prove, that the deplorable and alarming condition of Ireland arose from the misconduct of ministers, in not having adopted measures for its relief; and made motions charging them with criminal negligence respecting the sister kingdom. This accusation was powerfully supported by lord Shelburne and Mr. Fox, in their respective houses; ministers, without attempting to refute the statements, made a very able defence of their own conduct. They strongly contended that the condition of Ireland was owing to causes over which they had no control. In this part of the defence, the forcible and well directed understanding of Mr. Dundas was employed in vindicating administration; and exhibited a clear and masterly view of the defective system of our commercial policy respecting Ireland, in which her miseries originated many years before the appointment of the present ministers, and before the present reign. The restrictions imposed in the general system of our trade laws were conceived in prejudice, and founded in ignorance and impolicy; but the prejudices were so strengthened by time, and confirmed by the habits of a century, that they appeared at length to have become a part of our very constitution, which affected members of parliament as well as all ranks of the people: and thence the attempt made in the two preceding sessions to obtain only a moderate relaxation, met with the most determined opposition. The few who undertook the invidious task, finding themselves obliged to encounter prejudice without, as well as petitions and pleadings at the bar, were at length overborne by numbers. Distresses, which arose from the frame of our commercial policy, and the errors of public opinion, it was illiberal and unjust to impute to the servants of the executive government. From the charge of negligence, in not having formed a plan of relief during the recess, lord North himself undertook the defence of ministry. Notwithstanding the multiplicity of other affairs in which they were occupied, they had actually bestowed much time and attention in collecting information, and forming a plan for the relief of Ireland; in a week, however, he should be ready to bring forward propositions for that purpose. Accordingly, on the 13th of December, he opened his scheme,

* See Annual Register, 1780.

[Bills passed for that purpose. Proposed scrutiny into the public expenditure.]

and proposed; first, to repeal the laws which prohibited the exportation of Irish woollen manufactures from Ireland to any part of Europe; secondly, that so much of the act of the 19th George II. as prohibits the importation of glass into Ireland, except of British manufacture, or to export glass from that kingdom, should be repealed: and, thirdly, that Ireland should be suffered to carry on a trade of export and import to and from the British colonies in America and the West Indies, and her settlements on the coast of Africa, subject to such limitations, regulations, restrictions, and duties, as the parliament of Ireland should impose. The system of the minister was received with great satisfaction, and even applause, by opposition.

His introductory speech, with very great ability, accurate and extensive knowledge, exhibited a view of the state of Ireland and its causes, the necessity of amending its condition, and the principles which he proposed to apply as most conducive to the purpose. Bills founded on the two first propositions were accordingly introduced, passed both houses without any contest, and received the royal assent before the recess. The third, more complex in its nature, and requiring a great variety of investigation, was postponed till after the holidays; not only that time might be afforded for discussion, but that it might be known how the new measures affected the Irish. It passed in the month of February, 1780. These acts, imparting in so great a degree the benefit of a free trade, were received with rapturous gratitude by the warm hearts of the generous Irish. Instead of being dictated by colleagues of more imperious dispositions and narrower capacities, this wise and liberal plan resulted from lord North's own heart and understanding; and, by restoring harmony in disputes between branches of the same community, demonstrated that conciliation is much sounder policy than coercion.

Among the various subjects of animadversion on the conduct of ministry, the waste of public money this session occupied more than even its usual attention. Provision for the national service originates in the representatives of the people; an inquiry, however, into the application of the sums that have been voted, is certainly not foreign to the lords, who are a branch of the legislature; and consist of so great proprietors, proportionably affected by increase of impost: accordingly, peers in opposition took a very active share in endeavouring to scrutinize expenditure, and lessen profusion. The duke of Richmond and lord Shelburne charged ministers with the greatest prodigality, and respectively made motions of inquiry, intended to be prefatory to others which should embrace the whole circle of expenditure. The duke of Richmond laid down, as the basis of the proposed scrutiny, a few strong and comprehensive propositions: that by the infatuation of government, we were engaged in wars which necessarily demanded immense sums of money; that ministers ought, by the most rigid possible economy, to moderate enormous evils of their own creation; so far were they from exercising the frugality incumbent on all managers of the public money, but more especially on those to whose folly and misconduct the cost was owing, that unbounded prodigality was evident in the civil list, the army, the navy, and the ordnance, the four great sources of national expense; the people groaned under the burthens imposed on them for a supply to ministerial profusion: our chief rival was, under her skilful and upright financier, contracting her expenditure, while we, under our incapable

[Petitions from Yorkshire and London.]

and corrupt stewards, were increasing ours beyond all precedents of history, and all possibility of longer endurance.* From these grounds inferring that either economy or ruin was the alternative, he proposed to commence the reform with the reduction of the civil list, and moved an address to his majesty, praying him to set the example; representing, that from relieving the miseries of a distressed people, his crown would derive a lustre superior to any which could arise from external splendour; and that even after the requested curtailment, sufficient means would be left for every rational and beneficial purpose of regal magnificence. Ministerial peers admitted that there had been *some* want of frugality during the present administration; but whatever system of economy might be adopted, it should not begin with the crown, the splendour of which should be maintained, as including all the dignity and honour of the empire. It would be inconsistent and unjust in parliament to withdraw from the king that which had been unanimously granted. Lord Thurlow, with his masculine force of understanding, and acuteness of professional habits, encountered the motion more closely than any of the other peers. The proposition was founded on the alleged distresses of the people; the fact had not been established, it rested merely on his grace's assertion; if the miseries did exist, and did arise from public prodigality, the department in which it prevailed ought to be specified, and the alleged extravagance proved, that the remedy might be applied to the actual evil: were the cure to be an application of the civil list, the motion proposing merely a reduction, without specifying its extent, was vague and nugatory; it was impossible to understand its exact import; the house could not vote for an indefinite requisition. These arguments prevailed, and the motion was rejected by a majority of seventy-seven to thirty-six. Proceeding on the same general principle, the earl of Shelburne proposed to inquire into the extraordinaries of the army; he took an historical view of the sums expended under that head, of the armies supported, victories and advantages obtained, from the beginning of king William's war to the peace of Paris, and demonstrated that the sums charged in the accounts of 1779, were one million more upon that article than in any year of our former wars. After a detail illustrating ministerial prodigality, he moved a resolution, that the alarming addition annually made under the head of extraordinaries, required immediate check and control; but the motion was negatived by a considerable majority.

The issue of these propositions for reducing the national expenditure, caused very great discontents in various parts of England. The enormous expense of our establishments, from the war, and from waste, began to be severely felt in the nation, and awakened the attention of the metropolis, and the different counties. Yorkshire and London, the chief districts of landed and monied property, took the lead in expressing alarm, petitioned parliament, and were followed by other corporations. The petition of the county of York, comprehensive in its object, explicit in its avowals, strong through temperate in its language, constitutional in its principles, exact and circumstantial in its detail, was the model on which other applications were formed. The nation, it set forth, had for several years been engaged in a very expensive and unfortunate war.

* See parliamentary debates for 1780, duke of Richmond's motion for economical reform.

[Mr Burke's plan of economical reform.]

Many of our valuable colonies had declared themselves independent, and formed a strict confederacy with our most inveterate enemies; the consequence of these combined misfortunes was a large addition to the national debt, a heavy accumulation of taxes, with a rapid decline of the trade, manufactures, and land rents of the kingdom. Alarmed at the diminished resources and growing burthens of the country, and convinced that rigid frugality was now necessary for the salvation of the state, they observed with grief, that many individuals enjoyed sinecure places with exorbitant emoluments, and pensions unmerited by public service. They conceived the true end of every legitimate government to be the welfare of the community, and that the British constitution, which seeks the public good, peculiarly intrusts the national purse to the house of commons; and represented, that until effectual measures were taken to redress these grievances, by suppressing useless donatives, and preventing unnecessary and extravagant largesses, the grant of any additional sum of money, beyond the produce of the present taxes, would be injurious to the rights and property of the people, and derogatory from the honour and dignity of parliament. This petition was introduced by sir George Saville, the disinterested and patriotic member of that great, industrious, and opulent county. With much good sense, plain and perspicuous reasoning, he supported the representation, and urged the necessity of giving it a favourable attention. Ministers did not object to the propriety of receiving this address; but, by postponing the consideration of its complaints, they eventually defeated its purpose.

These discussions concerning public expenditure were preludes to the celebrated plan of economical reform which was introduced this session by Mr. Edmund Burke. Before the recess, this philosophical orator delivered a speech in which he exhibited the action and re-action of public profusion and corrupt influence; reviewed the present expenses and general establishments; stated principles, and expounded details, in order to ascertain utility. He intimated that soon after the holidays, he would bring forward a plan for the reduction of public expenditure. Able men of all parties, knowing the immense grasp of the author's capacity, the extent and compass of his legislative views, the fulness and accuracy of his knowledge, the variety and novelty of his illustrations, waited with anxious expectation for the performance of his promise; ministers and their friends, anticipated statements and arguments which they would not receive with conviction, at least with pleasure and approbation: nevertheless, they assured themselves of philosophy, eloquence, and poetic imagery, which would fill them with delight and astonishment. The 11th of February, 1780, Mr. Burke presented his plan, comprehending two objects, the reduction of expense, and the better security of the independence of parliament. His introduction stated the difficulties which he must encounter in conducting a plan of reform lessening private emolument; by which it was proposed to sacrifice individual gain from donative, to general good in the retrenchment of unnecessary cost. In such a case private feeling was to be overborne by legislative reason; a man of long sighted and strong nerved humanity, would consider, not so much from whom he took a superfluous enjoyment, as for whom he might preserve the absolute necessities of life. He laid down the following general principles, as the basis on which he was determined to raise his superstructure of reform: that all establishments, which furnish more

[Outlines of the plan—it is rejected by parliament.]

matter of expense, more temptation to oppression, or more means and instruments of corrupt influence, than advantages to justice or political administration, ought to be abolished: these rules he applied to certain institutions, public estates, offices, and modes of disbursement, and proved, by accurate documents and conclusive arguments, that the inferior jurisdictions answered no purpose which might not be better effected by the supreme character of the sovereign. He proposed, therefore, that the principality of Wales, the county palatine of Chester, the duchy, and county palatine of Lancaster, and the duchy of Cornwall, should be united to the crown; and that offices now annexed to these separate jurisdictions, being sources of useless expense, and means of corrupt influence, should be abolished. His chief attention was bestowed on the household: he proposed to abolish the offices of treasurer, comptroller, cofferer, and master of the household; the wardrobe and jewel offices, the board of works, and a great part of the civil branch of the board of ordnance; subordinate treasuries, the pay offices of the army and navy; and the office of the paymaster of the pensions. These payments he designed in future to be made by the exchequer, and the great patent officers of the exchequer reduced to fixed salaries, as the present lives and reversions should successively fall. A great number of inferior places, too inconsiderable for historical particularization, were also to be abolished by the plan of Mr. Burke. He proposed to suppress the new office of third secretary of state, as totally unnecessary; also to limit pensions to sixty thousand pounds a year, but without interfering with present holders; and concluded his plan of reduction, by recommending the entire annihilation of the board of trade, as an office totally useless, answering none of its avowed purposes, merely providing eight members for parliament, and thereby retaining their services. To his scheme of reform, he subjoined a system of arrangement, which he conceived would effectually prevent all future prodigality of the civil list. In order to facilitate this regulation, he proposed to establish a fixed and invariable order in payments, to divide liquidations into nine classes,* ranked respectively according to the importance and justice of the demand, or to the inability of the persons entitled to enforce their pretensions. Such are the outlines of Mr. Burke's scheme for economical reform, wherein an impartial examiner must admit the justness and comprehensiveness of the general principles of political economy, also the accuracy of his details of office, and acknowledge that considerable saving would accrue to the nation from the adoption of the plan. The utility of economy, however, would have been much greater to infinitely more momentous departments of public expense, than any within the civil list—to the ordnance, the navy, and the army. It is probable, that if Mr. Burke had succeeded in his first project of reform, he afterwards would have carried his efforts to the largest sources of expense: all parties joined in bestowing the highest applause on the depth of his financial philosophy, and the profound research and acute discrimination which appeared in every part of his scheme; but, when the principles came to

* 1st, the judges; 2dly, ambassadors; 3dly, tradesmen to the crown; 4thly, domestic servants, and all persons with salaries not above two hundred a year; 5thly, pensioners from the privy purse; 6thly, holders of salaries above two hundred a year; 7thly, the whole pension list; 8thly, holders of offices of honour about the king; 9thly, the lords of the treasury and chancellor of the exchequer

[Motion respecting the increasing influence of the crown.]

be applied to the particular plans of reform, ministers did not accede. Burke grounded upon his system five bills, which, after much discussion, were at length severally rejected.

While Mr. Burke was engaged in recommending public economy, Mr. Dunning was actively employed in attempting to remedy an evil which he deduced from public profusion. Petitions, both numerous and strong, were presented, deprecating the prevalent abuses, and especially the waste of public money. The principle* of the several applications was the same; that the national revenue ought to be solely employed for promoting the national benefit: that every shilling which was otherwise expended, was injustice to the people; and that a great portion of the prodigality was occupied in extending the authority of the crown and propping the power of ministers, which they never could support by wisdom and virtue. On the 6th of April the petitions were discussed, and a memorable debate ensued, in which Mr. Dunning took the lead in favour of the applicants: he exhibited, in a connected series, the history and philosophy of constitutional law; the measures and causes which endangered our rights and liberties in former times; presented a glowing picture of the conduct of ministers; and endeavoured to prove that it had a similar tendency to the counsels which had produced so much mischief under the house of Stuart. From a very extensive, accurate, and interesting detail, in a series of acute and powerful reasoning, he drew the following conclusion: "that the influence of the crown has increased, is increasing, and ought to be diminished;" and proposed this allegation as a resolution to be voted by the house. Such a proposition summoned the chief ability and eloquence of the house in efforts of either attack or defence. So strongly did Dunning and his coadjutors impress many of the country gentlemen, that they joined opposition; and to the consternation of ministers, and the surprise of their opponents, the motion was successful. Lord North in a few days recovered his wonted majority; but opposition, elated with their late success, and the circumstances from which it proceeded, trusting they would be ultimately victorious, redoubled their exertions. The petitions were the subject of repeated controversies; in one of which,† Mr. William Adam, a young member of high promise, exhibited a very masterly view of the dangers which accrue from agitating the multitude to an active interference in the government of the country. This gentleman, son of the eldest of the four celebrated brothers, was a native of Scotland, and educated at Edinburgh, at the time that university, headed by Robertson and supported by Blair and Fergusson, was at the zenith of literary glory. From Fergusson his sound and vigorous understanding imbibed the justest principles of ethics and of politics, and was taught to cherish and respect mingled liberty and order. His friend and relation, Robertson, instructed him, while he valued the rights of the people, to prize also the constitutional prerogatives of the crown. On the basis of philosophy, he raised the superstructure of history and of law; and so founded and prepared, he procured a seat in parliament. Mr. Adam drew a striking picture of the progress from popular agitation to revolution and anarchy in the days of Charles I., and

* See petitions for York, London, Westminster, and other places, in spring 1780.

† On a motion of Mr. Dunning, April 24th, for an address to his majesty, deprecating the sudden dissolution or prorogation of parliament.

[Motion relative to the East India company. Increasing spirit of association.]

allowed that the opponents of the court began from justifiable and noble motives; he marked the movements of so formidable an engine as the multitude, and followed its progress until its rapidity and force, becoming totally ungovernable, crushed the constitution. The genius of Mr. Fox gave a different interpretation to the same period of history, and ascribed the fate of Charles, and the calamities of his country, to the weak obstinacy of the king, who, by refusing, in the early part of his reign, to gratify the reasonable wishes of his people, provoked them to a resistance, which brought destruction on himself. The efforts of opposition, great as they were, did not, in the present session, recover the majority of the 6th of April.

A bill was proposed for excluding contractors from parliament, and by ministers suffered to pass the house of commons with little opposition, probably from either a foreknowledge or predestination of its rejection by the other house. On the general ground of diminishing the influence of the crown, a bill was introduced for preventing revenue officers from voting at elections, but rejected by a small majority. On the 23d of March, lord North informed the commons, that the East India company not having made such proposals for the renewal of their charter as he deemed satisfactory, he should move the house for the speaker to give them the three years notice ordained by act of parliament, previous to the dissolution of their monopoly; that the capital stock or debt of 4,200,000*l.* which the public owed to the company, should be fully paid on the 25th of April, 1763, agreeably to the power of redemption included in the same act. Mr. Fox inveighed against this measure of the minister as tending to deprive us of our India possessions, as he had lost us America. Lord North answered, that he intended nothing more than to prefer a legal claim, in behalf of the public, to the reversion of an undoubted right. The proposed notice did not preclude any propositions which might hereafter be made by the company, and did not restrain parliament from accepting any offers which it approved; it merely intended to prevent a year of the public right to the reversion of the company's trade from slipping away without compensation. The company, as it was now established, was certainly the best medium for drawing home the revenues from the Indies; but if they were either so unreasonable or imprudent as not to offer a fair bargain to the public, a new corporation might be formed, and effectual measures adopted to prevent or remedy the threatened evils. These representations of lord North were so reasonable, that his adversaries suffered him to carry his motion without a division.

On the 5th of May, general Conway proposed a plan of conciliation with America, by removing all their just complaints, without acknowledging their independence. It was opposed by ministers, as degrading and ineffectual; and was faintly supported by the chief men of opposition, who thought it totally inadequate to its object. Repeated motions were made in both houses, for inquiring into the army extraordinaries and different articles of public expenditure; but they were all negatived. Propositions were also offered for the removal of ministers, but met with the same fate. Associations continued to be formed both in London and other parts of England, the object of which was reform of abuses, with a change of measures and of men.

While so many, both within and without parliament, displayed enmity

[Incident which damped that spirit. Lord George Gordon.]

to ministers, proceedings took place which damped the spirit of association, suspended all opposition, and produced unanimity in both legislative assemblies, in every enlightened well-wisher to his king and country, to whatever sect or denomination he might belong. Legislature, finding the populace of Scotland so much averse to the relief of the Roman catholics, had not extended their system of tolerance to that country. The successful resistance of the Scottish zealots encouraged fanatics in England, to expect that by efforts equally vigorous, they might procure the repeal, on this side of the Tweed, of the laws which had been prevented on the other. A protestant society was formed in England, consisting of members of nearly the same rank and character which composed the association of Scotland; persons who, though many of them were well-meaning friends to the protestant religion, were generally uninformed men, and estimated popery by its former, not its modern state; and who were for applying towards papists that intolerant spirit which constituted one of the worst qualities of popery during the ages of ignorant credulity and clerical usurpation. The members of this protestant club had met, and declaimed, and wrote, and advertised, during the whole winter, but attracted the attention of neither ministers nor opposition. Had these humble associators been left to themselves, their fanaticism might have evaporated in harmless vanity, gratified by the distinction which its lowly votaries acquired from seeing their names in print, as members of committees for watching over the interests of religion; but the interference of a nobleman in their meetings and resolutions, gave a very different determination to their conduct. Lord George Gordon, younger brother of an illustrious family, was a youth of ingenuity and volatile fancy, but little guided by prudence and sound judgment: wild and chimerical in his notions, ungovernable in his passions, and excessive in dissipation, he was peculiarly marked by eccentricity of conduct. To such a character the extravagance of fanatical theology was no less adapted than any other fanciful hypothesis to dazzle his imagination, or impassioned enthusiasm to inflame his heart. He was, besides, fond of distinction; in the house of commons his lively and desultory sarcasms afforded relief to serious debate, but he was by no means qualified for attaining eminence as a British senator. Emulous rather than ambitious, if he acquired notoriety, he little regarded either the means or the objects. In Scotland he had taken an active share in the violence of the former year, and had corresponded with the most noted of the fanatical demagogues. In England, he intimated to the protestant club his theological sympathy: and proud of a titled associate, these persons complimented him with an offer of the president's chair. Behold lord George Gordon now the chief bulwark of the protestant faith against the approaches of antichrist! He entered the more eagerly into the views of those reforming saints, because he saw they confined themselves to the theological theory, without scrupulously inquiring into moral practice; and that if he displayed an ardent zeal against popery, the president of the protestant association might pursue his former course of life with as little restraint as before his conversion.* His dress, how-

* Mr. Wilkes, who had often been the companion of lord George's nocturnal adventures, applied to him, after his regeneration, part of a latin epitaph on Fleetwood Shepherd, another very zealous religionist of similar habits and pro-

[Proceedings of the protestants. Mob surrounds the parliament.]

ever, and outward deportment, were formed entirely on the puritanical model: with a fanatical populace he passed for a primitive saint, and possessed an influence compounded of the effects of his exalted rank, sanctimonious appearance, and anti-popish zeal. These causes combining with the natural and habitual wildness of his irregular mind, produced in the end of May propositions of a most inflammatory nature, which were speedily adopted as resolutions by the society. On Monday the 29th of May, a meeting was held at coach-makers' hall, to consider the mode of presenting to the house of commons a petition against popery. In a most furious speech, lord George endeavoured to persuade his hearers of the rapid and alarming progress of the Romish doctrines; declared that the only way to obstruct their progress was by approaching parliament with a firm and resolute tone, and demonstrating to their representatives that they were determined to preserve their religious freedom with their lives. He would himself run all hazards with the people, when their conscience and their country called them forth: he was not a lukewarm man: if they meant to spend their time in mock debate and idle opposition, they must choose another leader. A speech so perfectly coincident with the passions and prepossessions of its hearers, was received with the loudest applause. The president moved a resolution, that the whole protestant association should, on the following Friday, meet in St. George's Fields, at ten o'clock, and thence proceed to the house of commons. They were to advance in four divisions, the protestants of the city of London occupying the right wing, were to file off to London-bridge, and to march through the city; those of Southwark in the centre, were to take the route of Blackfriars; the left wing belonging to Westminster wheeling to the left, were to cross Westminster-bridge, followed by the presbyterians from Scotland, who were to cover the rear. The friends of the reformed religion were to ascertain their attachment to the faith by blue cockades, bearing the inscription *No popery*. These resolutions and dispositions might have alarmed men, who considered the powerful operation of religious fury, and the dreadful effects which it has so often produced; but ministers appeared to apprehend no danger, and actually, in the intervening days, adopted no measures for preventing tumult.

On Friday, the second of June, at the hour appointed, about fifty thousand persons met in the fields, and thence proceeded in the prescribed order to the house of commons; having arrived at the avenues to both houses of parliament, they insulted many of the members who were proceeding to discharge their senatorial duty. Lord George repeatedly came from the place which he held as a senator, and harangued the populace, exhorting them to persevere in urging their application, so as to threaten the violation of a senator's privilege. Several members expostulated with him on the outrages which his conduct was likely to produce.* The petition being presented, was,

pennities: *Nulla meretrix displicuit, præter Babylonicam—Except the harlot of Babylon, he was a friend to the whole sisterhood.*

* Lord George still exhorted the mob to persist, and many feared that the banditti would break into the house; whereupon a gallant veteran, belonging to as noble a family as lord George himself, and a member of parliament, putting his hand upon his sword, said, "Lord George, if one man of your lawless followers enter our house, I shall consider rebellion as begun, and plunge my sword into you as its leader and promoter." This resolute speech restrained the violence of

[Dreadful riots in London. Numerous conflagrations.]

after very little debate, rejected by a majority of one hundred and ninety-two to six. In the evening, a mob burned the Romish chapels belonging to the Sardinian and Bavarian ambassadors. On Saturday, the riots partly subsided. *Sunday*, the zealots again assembled to disturb the tranquillity of their fellow-subjects, to violate law, order, and justice. Directing their outrages against Moorfields, where there were many catholics, they destroyed dwelling-houses and chapels. On Monday, the rioters again assembled, and were joined by a multitude of those profligate and disorderly wretches, whom folly and vice, in the luxuries of a large and opulent city, impel to supply by depredation the want of industry and virtue. Lawless atrocity being now united to religious frenzy, produced more extensive and pernicious operations. They burnt the houses of protestants as well as catholics, and added plunder to conflagration. A proclamation was issued, offering a reward of 500*l.* for the discovery of the incendiaries, who, the first evening of the tumults, had set fire to the chapels of the ambassadors. Persons charged with this crime were sent to Newgate, escorted by a party of guards; and the soldiers were insulted and abused by the insurgents for performing their duty. On Tuesday, all the troops in town were distributed to assist the civil powers in protecting the lives and properties of their fellow-subjects, against the frantic outrages of temporary insanity, joined to the skilful and dexterous wickedness of habitual depravity. But the precautions of ministers had been neither proportionate to the danger, nor adopted at the season when the first appearance of tumult called for vigilance and vigour. The military force was on that day inadequate to its purposes, robbery and destruction rapidly increased. After burning many private houses, the insurgents proceeded to Newgate, set that building on fire, and by releasing the prisoners, acquired a re-enforcement of three hundred ruffians, eager to promote, and ready to execute, their projects of desperate villany. Instigated and assisted by this new band they directed their attempts against the magistrates who were most active in apprehending felons and repressing crimes, and with peculiar exultation they destroyed the house and effects of sir John Fielding. Resolved to attack justice in every department, they proceeded from her operative instrument to her supreme and wisest interpreter, and most vigilant guardian. Hastening to Bloomsbury-square, they attacked the house of the illustrious Mansfield, plundered and destroyed the valuable furniture, the constituents of accommodation and ornament; pictures, statues, and sculpture, the monuments of the attic elegance and taste which decorated genius and philosophy: but they effected a more momentous and irreparable mischief; proceeding to the library, they destroyed not only the books, but the manuscripts. The efforts of the highest talents, directed to the most important objects, with complete and comprehensive knowledge of the science of jurisprudence, the laws of this country, the details of cases varying so greatly in the manifold and complicated engagements of

Gordon, and is supposed to have contributed powerfully to save the house from such audacious intrusion.*

* Of this fact I was informed many years ago, by a gentleman who was present; and often have heard it repeated by others. The officer was general James Murray, uncle to the duke of Athol.

[Suppression of the insurrection.]

social, civil, and commercial life, in a great, powerful, and free people; the judicial and legislative wisdom of sixty years fell a sacrifice to the ruffian violence of an hour. When the yell of savage fury was heard approaching, lord Mansfield and his lady escaped by a postern, sought and found an asylum from royal hospitality.* On Wednesday, proceeding to Holborn, they set fire to two houses belonging to Mr. Langdale, an eminent distiller, which contained immense quantities of spirituous liquors: here the conflagration was terrible. Different gangs now undertook and effected the demolition of the several prisons. All trade was at a stand, houses and shops were shut, dread and consternation overspread the whole city. Wednesday evening, when drawing to a close, presented a scene the most tremendous and dismal, apparently portending the speedy downfall of the British metropolis, and the overthrow of the British government. At the same instant were seen flames ascending and rolling in clouds from the king's bench and fleet prisons, new bridewell, the toll gates on Blackfriars-bridge, houses in every quarter of the town, and especially the combustion of distilled spirits in Holborn. The approaching night was expected to bring destruction and desolation, and thirty fires were now seen blazing at one time in different quarters of the city; men and women were running from place to place, trying to secure their most valued effects, and to deposit in safety their helpless children. Now was heard the fell roar of savage ferocity, now the reports of musketry, endeavouring by the last resource of necessity, to repress rebellious fury, but hitherto with little effect; and every thing appeared to menace universal anarchy and devastation. Attempts were made on the repositories of national treasure. A banditti of rioters made an effort to break into the pay office, while the main body directed their attempt against the bank, and a powerful detachment was sent off to co-operate with the incendiaries, by cutting the pipes of the new river. But now the career of infatuation and anarchy was destined to have an end.

The ministers were certainly too tardy in collecting the armed force of the country, and thus suffered the insurgents to incur heinous guilt, and perpetrate irremediable and immense mischief. The chief municipal magistrate, overwhelmed with the same terror that had seized the rest of the inhabitants; brought no active or efficient civil force to assist the military. Though ministers were tardy, yet they were at length by necessity roused to vigour and energy. They assembled the militia and regulars in sufficient time to preserve the capital from conflagration, and the kingdom from ruin. Until Wednesday evening the insurgents had been paramount, and the soldiers unable to oppose their outrages; but they were now assembled in such numbers, and inspirited with such resolution, as effectually to resist, and afterwards to overpower the depredators and anarchists. The three preceding days and nights had been to the incendiaries seasons of unresisted victory: this was a night of contest. The troops at length prevailed. The numbers killed in this conflict were consider-

* They passed the two following days at Buckingham-house; where the sage, after so recent a view of the dreadful effects of unrestrained passion and triumphant vice, entertained his queen with reciting from the instructive inculcations, elegant composition, and impressive eloquence of Blair, the charms of wisdom, and the happiness of virtue.

[Loud complaints against the lord-mayor.]

able : many indeed died of inebriation, especially at the distillery of the unfortunate Mr. Langdale, from whose vessels the liquor ran down the middle of the street, was taken up by pail-fuls, and held to the mouths of the deluded multitude. The soldiers had been so successful during the night, and received such re-enforcements, that on Thursday the inhabitants began to recover from their consternation. The riots, however, being by no means quelled, the shops continued universally shut, and no business was transacted but at the bank. During this day, the soldiers were so active, that the insurgents were dispersed, and did not attempt to rally at night; the following day London appeared restored to order and tranquillity, lord George Gordon being apprehended by a warrant from the secretary of state, and committed to the Tower. Thus ended the tumult of 1780.

In retracing this tremendous insurrection, this horrible carnage and devastation, through the several causes, more or less proximate, to the ultimate ; from military execution to rebellious outrage ; English protestant association, springing from Scottish association ; we find that the series originated in the well meant, but misguided zeal of a few Scottish clergymen, who, contrary to the advice of the ablest and wisest men of their order, agitated the subject in the general assembly, and thereby excited a ferment through the people. So cautiously ought men to investigate and appreciate objects, and to consider consequences before they set in motion such a formidable engine as popular enthusiasm. Issuing from impassioned fanaticism, this insurrection began, most fortunately for the country, without any concerted plan. Had the bank and the public offices been the first objects of tumultuous fury, instead of the houses of individuals, the chapels and the prisons, there can be little doubt that they would have succeeded in their attempt. To the lord-mayor, government and many others imputed the progress of the riots to such a pitch of atrocity. Very strong and pointed representations from the secretary of state urged him to use every legal exertion. These not having produced the desired effect, were necessarily repeated in the form of remonstrances. It was alleged, on the other hand, in defence of the magistrate, that the provision of military force in the environs of London was so little adequate to the exigency of the case, as to render every effort of civil power unavailing. To this defence it was replied, that the inefficiency of the civil power could not be certainly pronounced, as it was not actually tried ; and that since the soldiers by themselves prevented the utter destruction of the capital, until the arrival of sufficient troops from the country, if they had been assisted by the municipal force, they might have much sooner repressed the insurgents, and prevented a great part of the mischief. Neither duty nor policy, it was said, can justify the commander of a considerable force, in the moment of threatened ruin to his country, to withhold his efforts, on a supposition that they may not ultimately prevail. Both wisdom and patriotism dictate resistance, as the only means of success against the invaders of our law, liberty, and property.

The effects produced by the riots on the public mind, are not undeserving of historical notice. Before this period, an English mob was generally considered as a test of the public opinion, an effusion of popular energy ; military interference was reckoned dangerous, if not altogether unconstitutional. This seemed to be the opinion of the duke of Newcastle, when he kept a mob in pay, ready trained and disciplined, to support the

[Parliament resumes its functions.]

recent accession of the house of Hanover, and to suppress tory tumults : a mode of conduct which had a more successful, or at least a more popular effect, than recourse to military force. But this conduct of the mob of 1780, destroyed the credit and consequence of such a body ; and the disturbance has been, upon the whole, deemed fortunate for the internal peace of the country, as it has taught government to oppose the smallest beginnings of riot or popular commotion.

On the 6th day of June, during the insurrection, above two hundred members of the house of commons had the courage to attend their duty, in spite of the banditti that occupied every avenue to the senate. They forced their way through the mob, and having taken their places in the house, unanimously passed spirited resolutions, becoming the dignity of legislators who disdained to succumb to lawless outrage. The first was an assertion of their own privileges ; the second, a motion for a committee to inquire into the late and present outrages, and for the discovery of their authors, promoters, and abettors ; the third, for a prosecution by the attorney-general ; and the fourth, an address to his majesty, for the reimbursement of the foreign ministers, to the amount of the damages which they had sustained by the rioters. They afterwards met on the 8th, but judged it expedient to adjourn to the 19th, that order might be completely restored ; and the house of lords adjourned to the same day. At their next meeting, his majesty was pleased to come to parliament, in order to exhibit to the legislature a general view of the measures which had been employed during the recent suspension of regular government. "The outrages," said the king, "committed by the hands of desperate and abandoned men in various parts of this metropolis, having broke forth with violence into acts of felony and treason, had so far overborne all civil authority, and threatened so directly the immediate subversion of all legal power, the destruction of all property, and the confusion of every order in the state, that I found myself obliged, by every tie of duty and affection to my people, to suppress in every part those rebellious insurrections, and to provide for the public safety by the most effectual and immediate application of the force intrusted to me by parliament. Though I trust it is not necessary, yet I think it right at this time to renew to you my solemn assurances, that I have no other object but to make the laws of the realm, and the principles of our excellent constitution in church and state, the rule and measure of my conduct ; and I shall ever consider it as the first duty of my station, and the chief glory of my reign, to maintain and preserve the established religion of my kingdoms, and, as far in me lies, to secure and perpetuate the rights and liberties of my people." All parties agreed in applauding their sovereign's speech, and in voting a loyal address ; though some members censured the tardiness with which ministers had prepared for the defence of the metropolis. The following day, a committee of the whole house considered the several petitions, praying for a repeal of the late bill, which had been made the occasion of so much mischief. No repeal was proposed upon those petitions ; no evil had actually happened from the relaxation of the single penal law which had been mitigated, and the consequences apprehended from it were considered as improbable and visionary. The protestant association still continuing to urge parliament to attend to their application, a bill was brought in by way of compromise, to prevent Roman catholics from teaching protestants ; a measure which was supposed to be both

[Supplies. Dissolution of parliament.]

conciliatory and innoxious, as very few of that religion were teachers. The bill having passed the commons, was carried to the house of lords: several peers, considering it a great indignity to parliament, and to that house particularly, to pass a bill which carried all the appearance of being forced upon them by outrage and threat, opposed its enactment. At length, others being impressed with the same idea, it was set aside by the usual expedient of fixing its farther consideration on a day after the time when they knew parliament was to be prorogued.

The supplies for the service of the year 1780 amounted to 21,196,496*l*. The number of seamen employed was eighty-five thousand, including marines, and thirty-five thousand British troops, including invalids, besides the forces abroad. No more than a million and a half of the navy debt was discharged. The extraordinary expenses of the army amounted to 2,418,805*l*. The new taxes, which had been levied the two preceding years to pay the interest upon the money borrowed, were found to be very inadequate to their object; recourse was therefore had to the sinking fund to make good this failure. To provide for these expenses, in addition to the usual resources of land and malt, exchequer bills were renewed to the same amount as the former year. The sinking fund was to provide two millions and a half, twelve millions were borrowed upon annuities, and 480,000*l*. raised by a lottery. The annuity bore four *per cent.* interest, and a farther annuity of 1*l.* 16*s.* 3*d.* for every 100*l.* for the term of eight years, the subscribers to be entitled to four lottery tickets for every thousand pounds subscribed, on payment of ten pounds for each ticket. The additional duties were, on malt, low wines, spirits, brandy, and rum, wines of Portugal and France, and legacies; on tea, coffee, and chocolate; and on advertisements in newspapers. All these taxes were levied from luxuries, or benefits enjoyed by the persons taxed: but duties on coals and on salt enhanced the price of necessaries, and bore heavy on the poor, whom every wise financier endeavours to press lightly. A vote of credit also for a million was passed, in addition to these supplies. At the conclusion of the session, his majesty, after having considered in his speech the war supplies and other usual topics, spoke in the following terms, at once generally descriptive of the duties of senators when retired to the sphere of their respective influence, and appropriate to the present time and situation: "My lords and gentlemen, let me earnestly recommend to you, to assist me by your influence and authority in your several counties, as you have by your unanimous support in parliament, in guarding the peace of the kingdom from future disturbances, and watching over the preservation of the public safety. Make my people sensible of the happiness they enjoy, and the distinguished advantages they derive from our excellent constitution in church and state. Warn them of the hazard of innovation, point out to them the fatal consequences of such commotion as have lately been excited, and let it be your care to impress on their minds this important truth—that rebellious insurrections, to resist, or to reform the laws, must end either in the destruction of the persons who make the attempt, or in subversion of our free and happy constitution." Thus ended, on the 8th of July, a very long and important session: and two months after the prorogation, parliament was dissolved.

CHAPTER XXV.

War with the French in India—siege and capture of Pondicherry—confederacy against the British interest—war with the Mahrattas—is concluded by the treaty at Poonah.—Hyder Ally instigates and forms a combination of native power against British India.—Warren Hastings—lofty genius—grand scheme for dissolving the confederacy—preparations of Hyder Ally to invade the Carnatic.—Europe.—Admiral Rodney—vindicates the naval glory of England by a signal victory over the Spanish fleet—important effects of this battle—relieves Gibraltar.—Spanish and French fleets do not attempt a junction.—Capture of the outward bound merchantmen—admiralty severely blamed.—America.—Expedition against Charleston by sir Henry Clinton—strength of that place, natural and artificial—siege—reduction—the province of South Carolina yields to the British arms.—Leaving the government of Carolina to lord Cornwallis, Clinton returns to New-York.—Wise administration of his lordship—obliged to take the field against general Gates—battle of Camden—lord Rawdon—victory of the king's troops.—Achievements of Tarleton—of major Fergusson: that able and gallant officer surprised and overpowered by numbers—death and character.—Affairs at New-York—defection of general Arnold—character, enterprise, and fate of major Andre.—West Indies.—Rodney arrives—his skill draws the enemy to battle—established mode of forming the naval line.—Rodney adopts a new plan of attack by ~~breaking the enemy's line~~—some captains misconceiving his intention, disconcert the execution—the event therefore indecisive—partial conflicts, but the enemy, though much superior in number, will not venture a close fight.—The enemy are disappointed in their chief objects of the campaign 1780.

WHEN Britain and France quarrel, the contests of these two boldest, most enterprising, and ablest of modern nations, affect the remotest regions of the earth. Disputes springing on the neighbouring coasts of the channel, tinge the distant Ganges with blood; and the pacific feebleness of eastern Asia mourns the warlike energy of western Europe.

The English East India company, with a perspicacity sharpened by private interest, had early penetrated into the hostile intentions of France, and saw that the semblance of peace could not long be preserved, and that no intermediate state, however coloured or disguised, could be kept long free from all the consequences of war; they were aware that, long before any account of their proceedings in the East could be received in Europe, these consequences would take such effect as to afford a sufficient cover and sanction to their measures. Before the commencement of the former war, the French had clandestinely conveyed so great an army to the islands of Mauritius and Bourbon, as to endanger the destruction of the British interest in India. Such a force might soon again be formed in those islands with equal privacy, and passing to Pondicherry, might enter the company's dominions so suddenly, as irresistibly to secure their possessions. Against so probable a danger, they immediately, on the delivery of the French rescript, resolved on a bold and decisive measure; and numerous as their body was, they conducted their plan with such extraordinary secrecy, that none entertained the smallest idea of the design, until the effect was publicly disclosed by the accounts from

[Siege and capture of Pondicherry.]

India. They proposed to undertake the siege of Pondicherry, the principal possession of the French; and fortunately the instructions were conveyed with unusual despatch to Madras. Major-general Munro, early in August 1778, advanced at the head of the company's troops to the neighbourhood of Pondicherry. The naval force of England in those seas was commanded by sir Edward Vernon, and consisted of the *Rippon* of sixty guns, the *Coventry* of twenty-eight, the *Sea-horse* of twenty, the *Cormorant* sloop, and the *Valentine* East Indiaman. This small force fearlessly adventured to attack this strong city of the French. On the 10th of August they arrived at this station, and discovered a squadron, which was commanded by M. De Tronjolly, consisting of one ship of sixty-four guns, one of thirty-six, one of thirty-two, and two French India ships armed for war. A very hot engagement ensued, and lasted above two hours, when, on the approach of night, the French retreated. Vernon expected that the admiral of the enemy, trusting to his superior force, would renew the battle the next morning: a contrary wind, however, and a northern current, drove the British ships from their station in the middle of the night, and they were not able to recover it until the 20th of the month. Having regained sight of Pondicherry, they perceived the French fleet in the road: an immediate engagement was now expected, and nothing was left undone by the commodore, in order to close with the enemy; but the alternate failure and contrary direction of the wind rendered all his efforts ineffectual: he trusted, however, that a battle would certainly take place the following morning. The French commander consulted the preservation of his ships more than the defence of the town, and during the night abandoned Pondicherry; and so expeditious was he in his means of escape, that his squadron was totally out of sight in the morning. The success of Vernon, and the departure of the French fleet, facilitated the operations of the besiegers, and appeared to afford a certain prospect of success. On the 21st of August, the land forces invested the town and fortress, while the fleet blockaded it by sea. Though the fort of Pondicherry was dismantled on its restoration to the French by the peace of Paris, yet fresh works had been since raised; but the chief strength consisted in the valour and conduct of its governor, M. de Bellecombe, and the courage of the garrison, who, nearly cut off from every hope of succour, persevered to the last extremity in a determined and gallant defence; they were opposed, however, by equal courage and military ability, with superior numbers. On the 18th of September, the batteries were opened, under the powerful fire of twenty-eight pieces of heavy cannon, and twenty-seven mortars. The artillery of the besiegers soon gained an evident superiority, and they were indefatigable in carrying on their approaches; but the activity and obstinate defence of the garrison rendered caution necessary, and, with violent rains which then frequently fell, could not fail of considerably retarding their works. Notwithstanding these impediments, the siege was so far advanced by the middle of October, as to render a general assault practicable; and on the 17th, every thing was ready for beginning the attack. Aware of the hopelessness of longer defence against such force, and of the ruin in which an obstinate and unfounded perseverance would involve his garrison and the inhabitants, the French commander proposed a capitulation, which was willingly accepted by the English leaders. The victorious warriors, with the generosity of British conquerors, bore

[Confederacy against the British interest. War with the Mahrattas.]

the most ample and honourable testimony to the gallantry of their enemy, and liberally agreed to every requisition that did not interfere with the public benefit or security. The garrison were allowed all the honours of war; and, as a particular mark of attention to M. de Bellecombe, the regiment of Pondicherry was, at his request, allowed to keep their colours. A numerous artillery became a prize to the victors; all public property underwent the same fate, but whatever was private was preserved to the owners. The company's troops employed in this siege consisted of ten thousand five hundred men, of whom fifteen hundred were Europeans; the garrison of near three thousand, of whom nine hundred were Europeans. The loss of the British amounted to two hundred and twenty-four slain, and six hundred and ninety-three wounded; and of the garrison to two hundred killed. Mr. Law, who had seen and undergone so many changes of fortune in India, was included in this capitulation, and again beheld the power of his country annihilated in that quarter of the globe. Thus commenced our efforts in British India, in the war against the French.

While our enemy was defeated on the coast of Coromandel, an extensive and powerful confederacy was formed with our European antagonists by the native powers of Hindostan. From the decline of the Mogul empire, the principal state of India within the Ganges, in population, valour, and resources, was the Mahratta empire, the original inhabitants of the mountains; hardened by their situation and secured by their fastnesses and defiles, this warlike nation had continued unsubdued by the successive conquerors of lowland India, and never submitted to a Mahomedan yoke. Deriving a precarious subsistence from pasturage and hunting, these highlanders were accustomed to supply their wants by depredations on the agricultural and fertile country, and hence acquired all the enterprise and activity which result from an incursive and predatory life. Though divided into a variety of tribes, yet deeming themselves sprung from the same origin, they acknowledged one paramount superior to all their separate chieftains, and had established a system of connexion and dependence, not unlike the feudal gradations of Europe. At their head was Ram Rajah, the descendant of a celebrated leader. In India, both Mahomedan and Gentoo, the principal offices of state descend by inheritance, and official influence, combining with hereditary power, frequently renders ministers very formidable rivals to their sovereigns. A little before this time, Madar Row, the prime minister, held the reins of government, which his father having with his assistance seized, had at his death left undivided to the son. Both the older and younger usurpers had exerted considerable ability, and acquired distinguished popularity. This youth's uncle, Raganaut Row, treacherously procured his assassination, and being obliged to fly his country, found shelter at Bombay. The refuge afforded to the fugitive greatly incensed the Mahrattas against the English. The presidency of Bombay concluded a treaty with Raganaut, by which they engaged to place him in the official situation recently held by his nephew, while he, on his part, stipulated the cession of extensive territory to the company; and the British from this inducement actually commenced a war.

By the treaty of 1769, Hyder Ally had stipulated with the company reciprocal assistance, if either party was attacked: he accordingly engaged in the war against the Mahrattas; but when thus involved, he complained that

[Warren Hastings. Combination of Hyder Ally with other native powers.]

the presidency of Madras had not furnished him with the promised succours. He indeed was reduced to great danger, from which having extricated himself with distinguished ability, he concluded a peace with the Mahrattas: and was the more dissatisfied with the presidency of Madras, as he imputed the failure of support, not to negligence but to design. He was aware of the extraordinary influence which the Nabob of Arcot possessed in the English council, and not ignorant of the disposition of that prince to embroil him and the company, and therefore began to connect himself with the enemies of Britain. A desultory war was carried on between Bombay and the Mahrattas until October 1774, when three gentlemen arrived in Bengal, who, by the act of 1773, were to be assessors in council to the governor-general: these were general Clavering, colonel Monson, and Philip Francis, esquire; and their first act was to urge the presidency of Calcutta to condemn the Mahratta war. The council complied, and sent an ambassador to negotiate a peace: after a variety of discussion, a treaty was concluded at Poonah, on the 13th of March, 1776.

The professed objects of the three new counsellors were, peace with the country powers, along with an inviolable observation of the public faith, and a strict attention to justice in all transactions with the natives. The governor at this time was Warren Hastings, a man of lofty genius and acute understanding, of a very comprehensive range, great in his designs, fertile in invention, dexterous in plan, and firm, bold, and rapid in execution. The death of colonel Monson in 1776, and of general Clavering in 1777, left Mr. Francis unsupported in council, and placed Mr. Hastings in a majority. The governor-general had been outvoted in the question respecting the peace of Poonah, which was extremely disagreeable to the presidency of Bombay. That body, knowing the resolution that had taken place in the council at Calcutta, began to hope for a revival of the treaty, and the acquirement of much more advantageous terms. The governor-general appeared not unwilling to second their wishes: but a variety of complicated considerations produced from Hastings a much grander scheme of policy, and a more extensive system of measures, than the council of Bombay had expected, or even conceived. Hyder Ally, ever since his late peace with the Mahrattas, had sought the closest connexion with that nation, and by his great political abilities, as well as his high personal character, had acquired powerful influence in their counsels. He had also, with singular zeal, assiduity, and success, paid court to the subah of the Decan: after the Mahrattas and Mysore, the chief native powers in the hither Peninsula, a negotiation was also opened between France, and both Mysore and the Mahrattas. Informed of all these circumstances, and from situation and conduct inferring design, Hastings entertained no doubt that a confederacy was projected against British India; though its specific object might not be hitherto defined, nor its extent ascertained, he had most probable grounds for concluding that a hostile combination was formed against those interests, with the advancement of which he principally was intrusted. He conceived it his duty to employ anticipatory measures, and began with a scheme worthy of his towering genius. As the Mahratta nation would be the most formidable member of the hostile league, he conceived the project of wresting the government of that country from the hands that now held it, and bestowing it on a sovereign, dependent on himself.

[Victory over the Spanish fleet off Cape St. Vincent.]

The deposed Ram Rajah being dead without heirs, one of the pretenders to the Mahratta throne was Moodajee Boosla the rajah of Berar, a considerable principality in the eastern part of the Mahratta empire, and near the British territories. This prince was on amicable terms with the presidency of Calcutta, and at variance with the Nizam and Hyder Ally, its apprehended enemies; he had a great army, unimpaired by war. Raganaut was promised the place of prime minister, when the rajah should be elevated to the throne; and having a considerable number of partisans in his country, was esteemed an important auxiliary. Meanwhile the presidency of Bombay having proposed conditions to the Mahrattas which they would not admit, declared that the treaty of Poonah was violated, and no longer binding on the company. An expedition being undertaken from Bombay, proved unsuccessful by the treachery of Raganaut, and a treaty was concluded at Wargaum between the presidency of Bombay and the Mahrattas. Meanwhile preparations were making for elevating the rajah of Berar to the throne; but at last this prince himself refused to have any concern in the undertaking, and was gained over by Hyder Ally to take a part in the confederacy against the English. In 1779, a formal league was concluded between the four chief native powers against England; and to this the inferior princés soon afterwards acceded. From Delhi to cape Comorin, from the Indus to the coast of Coromandel, all except Arcot, was hostile to the English name. The first object of attack was the Carnatic, which expedition Hyder Ally undertook to conduct; but, as military operations did not begin till the latter end of the year 1780, not to break the unity of that portion of history, I must reserve the narrative of those transactions until I can carry them to a more advanced period.

The naval campaign of 1780 opened honourably and advantageously for Britain. Gibraltar having been closely blockaded by the Spaniards, the relief of that important fortress was intrusted to admiral Rodney, an officer highly distinguished for intrepidity, nautical skill, and naval conduct: in his plans and execution he eminently displayed a boldness of adventure, that befitted a leader of Britons, who neither feared the dangers of the sea nor the enemy, and introduced a system of tactics the best suited to the men he had to command. Having sailed at mid-winter, he had been but a short time at sea when he fell in with a considerable convoy bound from St. Sebastian to Cadiz, consisting of fifteen merchant ships, guarded by a sixty-four gun ship, four frigates, and two sloops: the whole fleet was taken. The ship of war and some trading vessels, laden with bale goods and naval stores, he sent to England; the rest, whose cargoes were flour, he took with him to Gibraltar. Proceeding in his voyage, on the 15th of January, he descried off Cape St. Vincent, a Spanish squadron of eleven ships of the line under the command of Don Juan de Langara. The wind blowing towards the shore, the British admiral on perceiving the enemy, immediately kept to leeward in order to prevent them from escaping into their ports, favoured by the shortness of the day. The Spaniards in vain endeavoured to avoid a conflict. About four o'clock in the afternoon the English fire commencing with the usual energy and rapidity, was returned with spirit and resolution by the Spaniards. The battle was obstinately fought: the night soon arriving, was dark, tempestuous, and dismal, and its aspect was rendered more terrible to the British fleet, from being involved among

[Important consequences of this battle. Capture of British merchantmen.]

the shoals of St. Lucar, in endeavouring to intercept the enemy from attaining the shore: but these difficulties and dangers only stimulated their courage, and invigorated their efforts. The Spanish ship *St. Domingo* of seventy guns, with six hundred men, blew up, and all on board perished. The English man of war with which she was engaged narrowly escaped a similar fate. The action and pursuit continued with a constant fire until two o'clock in the morning, when the headmost of the enemy's line struck to the admiral.

The Spanish admiral's ship, the *Phoenix* of eighty guns, with three of seventy, were taken and carried safely into port; the *St. Julian* of seventy guns, commanded by the marquis de Medina, was taken, the officers shifted, and a lieutenant, with seventy British seamen, put on board; but by her running on shore, the victors experienced the caprice of war, by becoming themselves prisoners. Another ship of the same force was afterwards run upon the breakers, and totally lost; two more escaped greatly damaged, and two less injured were sent into Cadiz. Such was the final disposal of the whole Spanish squadron. Notwithstanding the inferiority of the enemy in point of force, yet, as the British admiral had to encounter a boisterous ocean, during the storms of midwinter, and gloomy darkness, with the additional danger of a lee shore, few actions have required a higher degree of intrepidity, more consummate naval skill, or greater dexterity of seamanship.

This was a very important victory; besides the great damage sustained by the enemy, six ships of the line were added to the royal navy of England; and the value of other prizes, in a public view, was greatly enhanced by the nature of their cargoes, the critical season in which they were taken, and the essential service to which they were applied. The victorious admiral proceeded to Gibraltar, furnished the garrison with necessary supplies, sent also stores and provisions to Minorca, and with part of his fleet set sail for the West Indies; the rest returned with the Spanish prizes to England, under admiral Digby, who in his way captured a French ship of sixty-four guns, one of a convoy to a fleet of transports destined for Mauritius. The success of admiral Rodney caused great joy in the nation, for some time disused to tidings of victory: besides the signal advantage obtained, they considered it as the general restoration of naval supremacy; and the discomfiture of the Spanish fleet off St. Vincent's had a powerful effect on the operations in other scenes of naval hostility.

Sir Charles Hardy having died in May, the command of the channel fleet was bestowed on admiral Geary, who sailed in the beginning of June. The enemy did not attempt to face our armament, but left their trade exposed to the British cruisers. In the beginning of July, the admiral fell in with a rich fleet of merchantmen from St. Domingo, and took twelve of the number; the rest escaped through a thick fog. After cruising for several weeks longer that commander returned into harbour, resigned the command, and was succeeded by admiral Darby. Meanwhile the British commerce received a severe blow: an outward-bound fleet of merchantmen for the East and West Indies sailed from Portsmouth, under the convoy of captain Moutray of the *Ramillies*, and three frigates. The Spanish fleet, joined by a squadron of French, was cruising off the coast of Spain and Portugal, without venturing to the northward of Cape Finisterre. The convoy included, besides the merchant-

[Dissatisfaction against the ministry. Operations in America.]

men, eighteen victuallers, store-ships, and transports, destined for the service of the West Indies. One of these was of particular importance, being laden with tents and camp equipage for the troops that were designed for active service in the Leeward Islands: the five Indiamen likewise, besides arms, ammunition, and a train of artillery, conveyed a large quantity of naval stores for the supply of the British squadron in the east. The convoy took a course much nearer the enemy's coast than was usual, or at least expedient. On the 9th of August it met with the enemy's fleet, and most of the merchantmen were captured. This loss caused great dejection among commercial men, and increased the dissatisfaction which had before prevailed against ministry. It was alleged by the friends of administration, that the convoy had pursued that track in order to accommodate the merchants and the East India company, who were taking in wines at Madeira: but it was replied, that the accommodation of the merchants was not a sufficient reason for touching at that island, with such danger of interception; that a course so near the enemy's coast was not necessary in order to steer to Madeira: and that if so easterly a track had been unavoidable, the convoy of such an immense property ought, instead of a single man of war and three frigates, to have been the whole channel fleet. Admiral Darby having been detained by contrary winds at Torbay, put to sea about the middle of September, and steered to the coast of Spain. Count de Guichen was ordered with a squadron to re-enforce the fleet in the West Indies, but finding his ships in a very indifferent condition, and being informed that the English fleet had sailed, he resolved for safety to join the combined armament off Cadiz. The French fleet, commanded by D'Estaing, being thus re-enforced, consisted of thirty-six sail of the line, which undertook to conduct the West India convoy to the ports of France. Don Louis de Cordova, the Spanish admiral, accompanied the French as far as Cape Finisterre. After their separation from the Spaniards, the French fleet descried admiral Darby, on the 7th of November, with twenty-two ships of the line, and two ships of fifty guns. D'Estaing, notwithstanding the great superiority of his numbers, being incumbered by the convoy, and aware of the bad condition of his ships, did not choose to hazard an engagement. Darby, on the other hand, observing the vast superiority of number on the side of the enemy, did not think it expedient to venture a battle. Ministers conceived that in the relative circumstances the most decisive advantages must have ensued, and without imputing any blame to the admiral, expressed their regret that he had not attacked the enemy. Darby, in the end of November, returned into port.

The campaign both in America and the West Indies was much more active and important than in Europe. In the former year, the arrival of D'Estaing with the French force on the American coast had turned the attention of sir Henry Clifton chiefly to defence; but the defeat and departure of that enemy, with the brilliant achievements and important successes of British detachments, encouraged him to hope for proportionate advantage from a comprehensive scheme of offensive operations to be carried on by his main army. He accordingly, in the close of 1779, made dispositions for invading South Carolina and besieging Charleston: with this view, leaving general Knyphausen to command at New-York, he, on the 26th of December, sailed from Sandy-hook, escorted by ad-

[Expedition against Charleston. Strength of that place.]

miral Arbuthnot, and directed his course to Savannah; where, from the stormy season, he did not arrive until the end of January. The ships being considerably damaged, he deferred his expedition for about twelve days, that they might be refitted.

Charleston, the capital of South Carolina, is situated between the rivers Ashley and Cooper to the north and south; with a harbour formed by the conflux of those streams, and an inlet of the sea to the east: communicating to the west with the main land by an isthmus between the two rivers called Charleston Neck, by which only the town can be approached by land. To these natural constituents of security, art and skill were not wanting. The fortifications had been considerably strengthened in 1776, to oppose sir Peter Parker: but chiefly on the side next the sea, whence the attacks had been directed. The Americans being now informed of the movements and force of the British arms, and aware that the town would be attempted on the side of the land, comprehended that quarter in their scheme of defence. They constructed a chain of redoubts, lines, and batteries, extending from Ashley to Cooper river, upon which were mounted upwards of eighty pieces of cannon and mortars. In front of the lines a canal had been dug, which was filled with water, and from the dam at both ends a swamp oozed to each river, forming natural impediments where the artificial terminated. Behind these were two rows of abattis, some other obstructions, and immediately in front of the works a double picketed ditch. The fortifications on the right and left were not only strong, but advanced so far beyond the range of the intermediate lines, as to enfilade the canal almost from one end to the other. In the centre there was a hornwork of masonry, which being closed during the siege, became a citadel.

Such were the defences of Charleston, on the only side on which it could be approached by land; and towards the water, numerous batteries covered with artillery forbade the approach of ships. But besides the security which Charleston derived from its numerous batteries, it was still more effectually protected by the bar or sand bank at the mouth of the inlet from the sea. This bar, impassable by the larger ships of war, rendered the entry of others difficult and dangerous: and just within it, a five fathom hole, of a sufficient depth of water, furnished a convenient station for a squadron to command the bar, and further obstruct the besiegers. This station was occupied by the American commodore Whipple, with a squadron of nine sail under his command, the largest carrying forty-four and the smallest sixteen guns. After the perils and difficulties of the bar were surmounted, before a fleet could reach Charleston, Fort Moultrie upon Sullivan's Island was to be passed, the fire from which had, on a former occasion, proved so destructive to a British squadron; and since that period, the works had been considerably strengthened and enlarged. General Lincoln trusting to those defences, and at the same time expecting large re-enforcements from the other colonies, shut himself up in Charleston at the earnest request of the inhabitants; and with the force under his command, amounting to seven thousand men of all denominations under arms, resolved to defend it to the last extremity. On the 11th of February the fleet sailed, and took possession without opposition of the islands of St. John and of James to the southward of Charleston harbour, while the army advanced across the country to the bank of Ashley river. Being at great pains to fortify posts, and preserve

[Siege and reduction of Charleston]

his communication with the sea, Clinton did not attempt to pass the Ashley until the 29th of March. This operation, in itself very difficult, was effected with expedition and success, through the skill and activity of captain Keith Elphinstone, who conducted the passage of the troops with distinguished address and ability. Having disembarked on the northern shore of Ashley, the army the following day encamped in front of the American line; and on the 1st of April, began to break ground before Charleston, at the distance of eight hundred yards from the provincial works. Meanwhile the British fleet approached the bar, in order to second the operations of the army. For this purpose admiral Arbuthnot shifted his flag from the Europa of the line, to the Roebuck of forty-four guns, which, with the Renown and Ramillies, were lightened of their guns, provisions, and water; the lighter frigates being capable of passing the bar without such preparation. Yet so difficult was the task in any state, that they lay in that situation, exposed on an open coast in the winter season, to the danger of the seas and to the insults of the enemy, for above a fortnight before a proper opportunity offered: the bar was, however, passed on the 20th of March, without loss.

The American commodore retired to Charleston; the British ships embraced the first opportunity for passing Fort Moultrie on Sullivan's Island, and notwithstanding a severe and impetuous fire, made good the way. Still the Americans had preserved the command of the Cooper river. General Clinton having now ascertained the co-operation of the fleet, and completed his first parallel, before he opened his batteries sent a summons to the American general to surrender. Lincoln, trusting to the strength of the place, and to the supplies and re-enforcements, which he might still receive by the Cooper, refused to yield; and to render the entrance of that river impracticable, ordered a chain of vessels to be sunk across its mouth. On the 9th of April, the British batteries opened, with visible effect. Meanwhile a force was detached under lord Cornwallis, in order to possess the other side of the Cooper river; and his lordship, assisted by the enterprising activity of colonels Webster and Tarleton, and major Fergusson, soon cut off all communication between the garrison of Charleston and any part of the country. Completely invested, the Americans offered conditions of capitulation; which being much too favourable for the present state, were instantly rejected by the British commander. Major Moncrieff, who had gained so much honour in the defence of Savannah, acquired no less applause from the very superior and masterly manner in which he conducted the offensive operations of the siege. The second parallel was completed on the 19th of April, and the third on the 6th of May. The last of these had been pushed so near to the provincial works, as to be close to the canal; and the canal, for a considerable part of its extent, was quickly drained of its water. On the same day, colonel Tarleton attacked and defeated another body of cavalry, which the enemy had with infinite difficulty collected together. The admiral, who had constantly pressed and annoyed the enemy, received information which induced him to attack Fort Moultrie on Sullivan's Island; he therefore despatched captain Hudson of the navy, with two hundred seamen and marines, to attack the fort by land, while he with the ships should batter it by water; but before the battery was opened, the garrison surrendered. After this advantage, general Clinton, wishing to preserve Charleston from the dreadful effects of a cap-

[Sanguine expectations of Clinton. He returns to New-York.]

ture by storm, again urged the American general by capitulation to avert destruction : but the provincials not being sufficiently humbled by their misfortunes, still refused to comply. The hostilities were recommenced : the batteries on the third parallel were then opened, and so great a superiority of fire obtained, that the besiegers were enabled to gain the counterscarps of the outwork which flanked the canal : this they likewise passed, and then pushed on their works directly towards the ditch. General Lincoln and the inhabitants, seeing that farther resistance would be ineffectual, offered to surrender. The British commanders were not disposed to press to unconditional submission, an enemy whom they wished to conciliate by clemency ; they therefore granted now the same conditions which they had before offered, and the capitulation was accordingly signed. The garrison was allowed some of the honours of war, but neither to uncase their colours, nor beat a British march on their drums. The continental troops and seamen were to keep their baggage, and remain prisoners of war until they were exchanged. The militia were permitted to return to their respective houses, as prisoners on parole ; and while they adhered to their engagement, were not to be molested by the British troops : and the citizens were allowed the same terms as the militia. The loss of the royalists at the siege of Charleston amounted to seventy-six killed, and one hundred and eighty-nine wounded. Of the garrison, the number of the killed and wounded was smaller. The prisoners were, the deputy-governor and the council of the province, seven general officers, a commodore, ten continental regiments, but much reduced, three battalions of artillery, with town and country militia, amounting to more than five thousand men ; to whom must be added about one thousand American and French seamen, and near four hundred pieces of ordnance, with a considerable quantity of stores. The commander in chief bestowed the highest encomiums on the officers and privates in the various departments of service. The officers most particularly specified were, earl Cornwallis, major-generals Leslie, Hayne, and Kosputch, and brigadier-general Patterson ; lieutenant-colonels Webster and Tarleton, major Fergusson, and major Moncrieff of the engineers in the land service ; and captain Keith Elphinstone in the navy.

In the sanguine hopes that spring from unusual success, sir Henry Clinton considered the reduction of Charleston as the completion of the conquest of South Carolina, and a prelude to the speedy recovery of the southern colonies. He expected, indeed, that the provincials themselves would now effectually co-operate in the re-establishment of their former connexion with the mother country. Great numbers flocked to Charleston from all parts of Carolina, to pay their court to the conquerors, and offer their services in support of his majesty's government. The general, with exulting joy, transmitted to the American minister these professions, and attributed to the affection of loyalty, what penetration might have discovered, and experience soon ascertained to be, in most instances, the dissimulation of policy, or the extorted homage of fear. Confident that his projects could be accomplished by a part of his army, he left a division for that purpose under lord Cornwallis, and returned with the rest to New-York. Before Clinton's departure, Cornwallis had been employed to drive out of the province a body of continental troops under colonel Burford, who arriving too late to throw succours into Charleston, had posted himself on the northern banks of the Santee. Here being joined

[Wise administration of lord Cornwallis. Battle of Camden.]

by those of the American cavalry who had survived their last defeat by Tarleton, he made a show of opposition to the British interest, and endeavoured to keep alive the expiring hopes of the provincials. On the 18th of May, earl Cornwallis began the pursuit, and on the 1st of June he overtook the enemy, and gained a complete victory. Of the Americans one hundred and thirteen were killed, and two hundred and three taken prisoners, of whom one hundred and fifty were wounded: Burford made his escape on horseback.

The American force being entirely driven from South Carolina, his lordship directed his attention to the internal administration of the province; while he was also making dispositions for marching into North Carolina, as soon as the heat should be abated, and the harvest being finished should enable him to form magazines for subsisting his troops. He established a board of police for the administration of justice, until the state of the province should admit of the regular re-establishment of its former civil government. He made commercial arrangements for permitting the inhabitants to export the produce of their country, enrolled the militia for assisting in defending the colony, and brought the country to a state of tranquillity and order; but these pleasing appearances had no long duration. Of the persons attached to the American cause, who since the capture of Charleston had submitted to the British government, either by taking the oath of allegiance, or obtaining a parole, some were influenced by the ruinous appearance of American affairs, the despair of ultimate success, and a wish to save the remains of their property that had escaped the ravages and devastations of war; and others were determined by the fear of punishment. The congress and Washington well acquainted with the fallacy of the loyal professions, and with the real dispositions of a great majority in South Carolina, resolved to send a detachment of the grand army to their assistance. The exertions of Virginia and North Carolina greatly increased the destined force; and general Gates with a considerable army advanced to the southern provinces.

Informed that the American general was marching towards Camden, lord Cornwallis was compelled to leave the civil arrangements; in which he had been so meritoriously and beneficially engaged, and to resume military operations. On the 10th of August he set out, with fifteen hundred regular troops and five hundred militia; on his march he was informed that Gates with near six thousand men had already entered the province. On the 15th, the armies came in sight of each other at Camden: both generals ordered their troops to halt and form: but it being very late in the evening, they did not engage till the next morning. Lord Cornwallis was posted on ground particularly advantageous to inferior numbers; a swamp on each side secured his army from being flanked, and narrowed the ground in front, so as to render the whole multitude of the enemy unable to act. At the dawn of the 16th, he made his last disposition for battle. His front line was drawn up in two divisions, of which the right was commanded by colonel Webster, and the left was headed by lord Rawdon.* A second line was formed for a reserve, and in the rear the

* This young nobleman, the eldest son of the earl of Moira, who possessed the advantages of high birth and ample fortune, accomplishments to grace the court, abilities to inform the cabinet, to convince and delight the senate, with taste and learning to charm and instruct the polished and literary circles of the metropolis,

[Defeat of general Sumpter.]

cavalry were disposed, being ready either to charge or pursue, as circumstances might require. The artillery was divided between the two lines, to second and support their respective efforts: the Americans formed their troops also into two lines. The opposite armies being thus marshalled, colonel Webster and lord Rawdon began the charge with such impetuosity as quickly to throw the provincial line into confusion; rallying, however, they made a very gallant resistance, and the second British line advancing, the enemy were entirely broken, and the cavalry completed their route.

The judgment of the general in planning, his promptitude in executing, and his coolness and self-possession during the whole of the engagement, were the themes of universal admiration and applause. The victory was decisive; the broken and scattered enemy were pursued as far as Hanging Rock, about twenty miles from the field of battle; all their artillery, amounting to seven or eight brass field pieces, with two thousand stand of arms, and their military waggons, were taken; about nine hundred were killed, and a thousand captured; the general baron de Kall, second in command, was mortally wounded and made prisoner. Lord Cornwallis had no sooner overthrown the enemy, than he prepared to render his success as beneficial as possible to the cause. Sumpter, an American general, had annoyed the royalists by cutting off or capturing detached parties, and intercepting convoys. The British commander, with great prudence, resolved, before he pursued his victory by marching into North Carolina, to rid the southern province of this troublesome enemy; he accordingly, on the very evening of the battle of Camden, gave directions to that gallant and enterprising officer colonel Tarleton, to attempt the interception of Sumpter. The American commander, as soon as he heard of the fate of his countrymen, retreated with great despatch, and having proceeded so far as to apprehend no danger of being overtaken, he halted to refresh his fatigued troops. Tarleton having received his general's orders, executed them with the utmost quickness: on the 10th of August he came up with the Americans, and before they had time to assemble, entered their camp, and cut them off from their arms and artillery. Being thus surprised the provincials were all killed, taken, or dispersed, and the whole of their stores, ammunition, baggage, artillery, and one thousand stand of arms, fell into the hands of the conquerors.

The discomfiture of general Gates's army, and the defeat and dispersion of Sumpter's corps so soon after, crushed the provincial force in the south; lord Cornwallis now waited only for supplies from Charleston, before he proceeded to North Carolina. Until provisions for the army arrived, he resumed the consideration of civil affairs. Finding that many of the Americans, after swearing allegiance to the British government, on the approach of Gates had revolted, he thought it prudent and necessary to restrain perfidy, and prevent future defection, by wholesome severity towards the most active and forward in treachery and violation of their oaths. The estates of all who after having professed obedience to Great Britain had joined the

or to enjoy the calm recesses of rural life; when his country's cause was at stake, sacrificed ease, however elegant, refined, or rationally employed, to the generous love of glory, and the imperious duties of patriotism; combined genius and heroism soon raised him to high command.

[Account of major Fergusson.]

enemy, were sequestered; but in this confiscation, separating their innocent families from the traitorous delinquents, he allowed from the property a liberal proportion for the maintenance of their wives and children. Instant death was denounced against those who, after having taken protections from the British government, should be found in arms for the Americans. On the eighth of September, his lordship marched towards North Carolina, and as he passed through the most populous and hostile parts of the province, he sent colonel Tarleton and major Fergusson to scour the country to his right and left. Having arrived at Charlotteburgh, and judging that place from its intermediate position between Camden and Salisbury, a favourable situation for farther advances, he prepared to establish a post.

While he was making the proper dispositions for this purpose, the commanders of his detachments were proceeding in their respective expeditions. Of these the most signal in its efforts, though fatal in its event, was the last enterprise of the gallant and meritorious Fergusson. This gentleman had already displayed that combination of intrepid heroism, inventive genius, and sound judgment, which constitute the valiant soldier and the able commander. The son of an eminent Scottish judge,* and nephew of a nobleman† of great literary talents, he sought fame by a different direction of equally vigorous and brilliant powers. In early youth he entered the army, and while a subaltern of eighteen, in the German war, was distinguished by a courage as cool as it was determined, his principal object being to become beneficial by professional skill and effort. The interval of peace he employed, by improving himself in military knowledge and science. When the disputes between Britain and her colonies were verging to a civil war, the boasted skill of the Americans in the use of the rifle was exhibited as an object of terror to the British troops. These rumours operated on the genius of Fergusson, and his invention produced a new species of the rifle, which he could load at the breech without using the rammer, or turning the muzzle away from the enemy, and with such quickness of repetition as to fire seven times in a minute. The riflemen might, meanwhile, be prostrate on the ground, and protected from the shot of the enemy by the smallest eminence, either natural or artificial. Fergusson displayed his contrivance to the satisfaction of lord Townshend, master of the ordnance, and other military men. When the war commenced, his regiment not being ordered for warlike service, he was extremely anxious to be actively employed for his king and country. He was accordingly introduced to the commander-in-chief, and appointed to command a corps drafted from regular regiments, and to discipline them for the practice of his new invention. At the battle of Brandywine he presented the first specimen of the use of his riflemen,‡ and obtained great praise for his skill and successful efforts. In the following year, he was employed in several of the detached expeditions, which, unimportant as they proved in result, yet, as we have seen, called forth a

* James Fergusson of Pitfour, lord of session and justiciary.

† Patrick Murray, lord Elibank, deemed by Robertson, Fergusson, Hume, and cotemporary sages, in genius and erudition equal to the authors of the *Scottish Augustan age*.

‡ See account of the battle at Brandywine, this volume, chap. xix.

[Expedition against the provincials.]

great degree of British valour and ability; and particularly distinguished himself in the incursive war on the North river, in 1779. Fergusson being engaged in the expedition to Charleston, was of very signal importance to the besieging army, and is mentioned with great praises by sir Henry Clinton.* After the reduction of that place, when Cornwallis was attempting by justice and mildness to restore harmony between the province and the mother country, he called for the assistance of Fergusson. To the valour, enterprise, and invention which were so important in war, Fergusson was known to add the benignant dispositions and conciliating manners which generate good will and cement friendship in situations of peace. Among the propositions of Cornwallis for the security and tranquillity of the recovered colony, one scheme was to arm the well-affected for their own defence. Fergusson, now a lieutenant-colonel in America, was intrusted with the charge of marshalling the militia throughout a wide extent of country. Under his direction and conduct a militia at once numerous and select, was enrolled and disciplined. One of the great tests of clearness and vigour of understanding, is ready classification, either of things or men, according to the qualities which they possess and the purposes that they are fitted or intended to answer. Fergusson exercised his genius in devising a summary of the ordinary tactics and manual exercises, for the use of the militia: he had them divided in every district into two classes; one, of the young men, the single and unmarried, who should be ready to join the king's troops to repel any enemy that infested the province; another, of the aged and heads of families, who should be ready to unite in defending their own town, ships, habitations, and farms. In this progress among them; he soon gained their confidence; by the attention which he paid to the interests of the well-affected, and even by his humanity to the families of those who were in arms against him: "We came not," he said, "to make war on women and children;" and gave them money to relieve their distresses. The movements of the Americans having compelled Cornwallis to proceed with great caution in his northern expedition, the genius and rapid efforts of Fergusson were required for protecting and facilitating the march of the army, and a plan of collateral operations was devised for that purpose. In the execution of their schemes, he had advanced as far as Ninety-six, about two hundred miles from Charleston; and with his usual vigour and success was acting against different bodies of the colonists that still disputed the possession of the country, when intelligence arrived from colonel Brown, commander of the king's forces in Upper Georgia, that a corps of rebels under colonel Clarke had made an attempt upon Augusta, and being repulsed, was retreating by the back settlements of Carolina. To this information colonel Brown added, that he himself meant to hang on the rear of the enemy, and that if Fergusson would cut across his route, he might be intercepted, and his party dispersed. This service seemed to be perfectly consistent with the purpose of his expedition, and did not give time to wait for fresh orders from lord Cornwallis; Fergusson yielded to his usual ardour, and pushed with his detachment, composed of a few regulars and militia, into Tryon county. In the mean time numerous bodies of back set-

* See this volume, p. 347.

[Defeat of Fergusson. Retreat of lord Cornwallis.]

ters west of the Alleghany mountains were in arms, some of them intending to seize upon the presents intended for the Creek and Cherokee Indians, which they understood were but slightly guarded at Augusta; others had assembled upon the alarm of enemies likely to visit them from South Carolina. These meeting with colonel Clarke, secured his retreat, and made it expedient for Brown to desist from his pursuit and return to his station at Augusta; while Fergusson having no intelligence of Brown's retreat, still continued the march, which was undertaken at his request. As he was continuing his route, a numerous, fierce, and unexpected enemy suddenly sprung up in the woods and wilds. The inhabitants of the Alleghany mountains assembled without noise or warning, under the conduct of six or seven of their militia colonels, to the number of sixteen hundred daring, well-mounted, and excellent horsemen. Discovering these enemies as he crossed King's Mountain, Fergusson took the best position for receiving them that the ground would permit. But his men, neither covered by horse nor artillery, and being likewise dismayed and astonished at finding themselves so unexpectedly surrounded and attacked on every side by the cavalry of the mountains, were not capable of withstanding the impetuosity of their charge. Already a hundred and fifty of his soldiers were killed upon the spot, and a greater number was wounded. Still, however, the unconquerable spirit of this gallant officer refused to surrender. He repulsed a succession of attacks from every quarter, until he received a mortal wound. By the fall of major Fergusson, his men were entirely disheartened: animated by his brave example, they had hitherto preserved their courage under all disadvantages. In the resources of his fertile genius they deservedly placed the utmost confidence, and with him perished every hope of success. Under such circumstances, the second in command, judging all farther resistance to be vain, offered to surrender, and sued for quarter.

From the ability and exertions of colonel Fergusson, very great advantages had been expected; and had he not been surprised and cut off, there is no doubt that every expectation would have been fully gratified. By his unfortunate fall, and the slaughter, captivity, or dispersion of his whole corps, the plan of the expedition into North Carolina was entirely deranged. The western frontiers of South Carolina were now exposed to the incursions of the mountaineers, and it became necessary for lord Cornwallis to fall back for their protection, and wait for a re-enforcement before he could proceed farther upon his expedition. On the 14th of October he began his march to South Carolina: his lordship and his army met with very great difficulties and hardships; their provisions were so nearly exhausted that the soldiers were limited as to quantity, with hardly any means of cooking;* the country was overflowed with incessant rains, they had no tents, and could rarely find a dry spot to kindle a fire; but the soldiers bore their hardships without repining, as they knew their officers and generals fared no better than themselves. His lordship himself was taken ill; but nevertheless preserved his vigour of mind, and arrived on the 29th of October with his army at Wymesborough, to wait for fresh re-enforcements from sir Henry Clinton. Meanwhile

* Stedman, vol. ii. p. 229.

[State of affairs at New-York.]

the mountaineers had dispersed, but the northeast part of the province was infested by the depredations of an enterprising partisan of the name of Marion.

In the northern part of America, operations and events were of much less importance than in the south. The force left for the security of New-York, appeared adequate to the defence of that city at the departure of Clinton; but the extraordinary rigour of the winter soon after exposed the British garrison to an unforeseen danger. One of the chief causes of the safety of New-York was its insulated situation, which gave full effect to our naval superiority. The uncommon intenseness of the frost during the winter of 1779–80, deprived it of this protection. By the middle of January, the North river was so completely covered with thick ice, that the largest army, with the heaviest artillery and baggage, might have passed on it with ease. In other quarters, towards the country, New-York was no less accessible, whilst its communication with the sea was entirely cut off. In this perilous situation, the veteran general Knyphausen took such precautionary measures as prudence dictated; the seamen were landed from the ships and transports, and formed into companies; the inhabitants were embodied, officered, and took their routine of duty with the regular garrison. They were deprived of those supplies which a communication by water would have afforded, and in particular suffered so severely for want of fuel, that it became necessary to break up some old transports, and to pull down some uninhabited wooden houses, to supply their present necessities. Fortunately for the British garrison, Washington's army was in no condition to profit by the accessibility of New-York; it had been greatly weakened by detachments that were sent to the relief of Charleston, was in extreme want of provisions, and other necessaries, and from that cause seized with the spirit of discontent almost rising to mutiny. No attempt was made on the British garrison, except to straiten its quarters, and to intercept convoys. In February, major Matthews having defeated a party of Americans posted at Kingsbridge to interrupt the communication of the garrison with the country, opened the way for more liberal supplies. The spring advanced, and, thawing the ice, restored New-York to its insular situation; and the British commander, exempted from the necessity of attending to defence, made dispositions for offensive measures. Informed of the prevalence of a mutinous spirit in the American army, and imputing to disaffection what really arose from distress, on that supposition hoping for the co-operation of the Americans, he attempted to establish the royal standard in the Jerseys: but he soon found that the American soldiers, though they repined at their difficulties, persevered in their inveteracy; and finding that, opposed by the provincials, his troops could obtain no footing in that country, he recalled them to New-York. Such was the state of affairs when general Clinton returned from Charleston, on the 23d of June. General Washington, expecting the speedy arrival of a French armament, confined his operations to desultory and detached excursions. On the 10th of July, the expected re-enforcement reached Rhode-Island: it consisted of seven ships of the line, some frigates, and a great number of transports, having on board six thousand troops. The fleet was commanded by De Ternay, and the troops by Rochambeau: in order to prevent discussions of rank in command,

[Defection of general Arnold.]

and to obviate every difficulty that might arise from the junction of the French troops with the American army, a commission was sent to general Washington, appointing him a lieutenant-general of France, and commander of the forces now sent. So powerful a re-enforcement revived the drooping spirits of the Americans, and invigorated the exertions to recruit their own army. The French squadron being superior to that of Arbuthnot, the British commander thought it prudent to act on the defensive; but six ships of the line arriving from England, they prepared for an expedition to Rhode-Island, in order to act offensively against the French. Meanwhile Washington having his army strongly re-enforced, hastened across the North river, and approached Kingsbridge. So unexpected a movement obliged sir Henry Clinton to abandon the expedition against Rhode-Island, and return with the troops for the protection of New York, leaving admiral Arbuthnot to block up the French fleet at sea. Washington expected the count de Guichen with a fleet of twenty ships of the line from the West Indies, and entertained sanguine hopes that the whole combined force would overpower Clinton and Arbuthnot, and wrest New-York from the hands of the British: to concert measures for this design, he left his army, and repaired to the French commanders at Rhode Island.

While Washington was absent for this purpose, a scheme was formed for delivering to sir Henry Clinton the strong post of West Point in the highlands upon the North river, the possession of which would have nearly cut off all communication between the northern and middle colonies. The author of this project was the celebrated general Arnold. This officer, after the campaign in the Jerseys, had been appointed commander of the American garrison that occupied Philadelphia: there he had lived so luxuriously and splendidly, as to disgust the quakers, who were the principal inhabitants of that city, and to displease the congress, by a conduct so totally inconsistent with the austerity of republicans beset with danger; he lived also so profusely as far to outgo his stated income. To supply his deficiencies he took shares in privateers, and embarked in other speculations; but his various projects proved unsuccessful. He made considerable claims on the public, but when his accounts were examined by commissioners, a great part of his demand was refused. He appealed to the congress, which gave judgment that the inspectors of his claims had allowed him too much. Seeing the embarrassment of his affairs, his creditors became extremely importunate. Such a situation galled the proud and irritable temper of Arnold; who, giving vent to his resentment, and recapitulating his services, complained in strong and indignant terms of the ingratitude of congress. Provoked at the freedom and severity of his expostulation, that body appointed a court-martial, to examine into his conduct as commander of Philadelphia. He was sentenced to a general reprehension, and also a reprimand from Washington, whom he deemed his personal enemy. From this time Arnold appears to have formed a design of betraying the interests which he professed to support, and joining the British; but to have suspended the execution until an opportunity should offer, of materially injuring the cause which he was about to desert, and serving the power he was about to join. The interval of Washington's absence appeared to him a favourable opportunity for delivering an important post to Clinton.

[Character and enterprise of major Andre.]

He accordingly opened a correspondence with the British general; and as he required a confidential agent to be sent, major Andre, aide-de-camp to sir Henry Clinton, and adjutant-general of the British army, undertook to confer with him, and bring the negotiation to a conclusion. This was a gentleman of very great merit, and rising fast to a high character in the army. Though open and honourable, yet sensible that, in war, stratagem is no less necessary than military prowess, he could find nothing in the employment assigned him which was inconsistent with the character of a gallant soldier. Perceiving that very momentous advantage might result to his country from the success of the scheme, he was by loyalty and patriotism stimulated to undertake its execution. Able and ingenious, he was conscious that he was well fitted to promote its success. The Vulture sloop of war had been stationed so near general Arnold's post, as to facilitate private communication without exciting suspicion. On the 21st of September, Andre went on board the sloop, and was at night conveyed in a boat to the beach without the lines, where he met with general Arnold. Daylight approaching before the business was finally adjusted, Andre was told that it would be necessary to conduct him to a safe place, where he should lie concealed during the day, and return at night on board the sloop. The retreat to which he was brought, was against his intentions, and without his knowledge, within the American lines. Here Arnold delivered to him various papers concerning the state of the forces, and other matters, for the information of Clinton, to show that general the most expeditious and effectual means of getting the American army into his power. The outlines of the project were, that Arnold should make such a disposition of the wing of the army under his command, as would enable sir Henry Clinton completely to surprise their strong posts and batteries, and throw the troops so entirely into his hands, that they must inevitably either lay down their arms, or be cut to pieces. Besides the immediate possession of these strong holds, and the cutting off so great a part of the enemy's best force without loss or difficulty, the consequences would have reached much farther, for the remainder of Washington's army would then have been laid open in such a manner to the joint exertion of the British forces by land and water, that nothing less than slaughter, dispersion, and final ruin, could have been the result. With respect to the Americans, such a stroke, it was conceived, could not have been recovered: independent of the loss of artillery, magazines, and stores, a destruction of their whole disciplined force, and of most if not all of their best officers, must have been immediately fatal. While Andre was with Arnold, the Vulture had shifted her position, in consequence of an attack from some artillery on shore, and was gone down nearer to New York; thence it being impracticable for Andre to return in the same way that he had come, he was obliged to proceed by land. Involved in such circumstances without any fault of his own, necessity compelled him to employ deception for his extrication. Hitherto he had worn his regimentals; now dressing himself in a plain suit, he received a passport, under the name of John Anderson, by which he, on horseback, passed the outposts. Conceiving himself in perfect safety, he was well advanced on his return, when three militia men meeting him on the road, suddenly seized the bridle, and interrogated him whence he came. Confused at so unexpected an encounter, he

[Trial and execution of Andre.]

answered *from below*: he immediately recollected his mistake, but too late; the suspicions of his interrogators were roused, and they insisted on searching him. He offered his purse and watch, and promised very high rewards if they would suffer him to depart: but all was unavailing. The generous Andre, now regardless of his own fate, had no anxiety but to save Arnold from the certain destruction that awaited him when the contents of the papers should be made known to the Americans. This object he effected by a dexterous stratagem: producing his passport from that general, he desired that he might be informed of his seizure, and that he himself should be detained in custody until Arnold's orders were known. The captors complying with this request, a message was sent to Arnold, which, announcing the detention of John Anderson, induced him, as Andre desired and expected, to seek safety by flight. He escaped, got on board the Vulture, and repaired to New-York. Andre being informed that Arnold was out of reach of the Americans, avowed himself under his proper name and character. Washington having now returned, Andre wrote to him, detailing the circumstances of the case. Disregarding every danger, his only concern was to prove that he had conducted himself as became a man of honour, and had no intention to be within the American lines, nor to act as a spy; that he was merely the agent of a negotiation, in which neither he nor his employer had practised treachery, or done any thing inconsistent with the laws of war. He had gone upon public business under a flag of truce, dressed in his uniform, to confer with the commander of that post; and had, without his knowledge, been brought within the American lines. His subsequent disguise had been the result of necessity, not of choice. Washington appointed a board of general officers to take cognizance of the case; and before these gentlemen Andre made an explanation, similar in substance to that which his letter to Washington had contained, but much more copious in detail. His enemies heard with admiration a defence, which with a magnanimous indifference to life, admitted the fact, but with a generous regard to reputation, vindicated the motives. The American board, however, confining themselves to the literal and simple fact of his being in disguise within the American lines, instead of taking into consideration all the concomitant circumstances, doomed the gallant Andre to suffer death as a spy. The only evidence of the fact was Andre's own admission: not only humanity, but justice required, that his own evidence, if allowed such weight against him, should also be allowed in his favour; and that his declaration of pure intentions ought to be considered, as well as his acknowledgment of an act contrary to the laws of war. At New York, all ranks, from a sentinel to the commander-in-chief, felt the most poignant concern at the situation of the unfortunate captive, whom they respected and admired as an officer, and loved and esteemed as a man. Sir Henry Clinton employed every effort to save so valuable a life: he opened a correspondence with Washington by means of a flag of truce, and urged every motive which justice, policy, and humanity could suggest, to induce a remission of the sentence. Finding his letters ineffectual, he sent out general Robertson with a flag, to confer upon the subject with any officers that should be appointed by general Washington. An interview took place between general Robertson and general Greene, who had been president of the court-

[West Indies. Arrival of Rodney. Naval operations.]

martial: but all efforts to save the unfortunate Andre were unavailing. Andre finding his doom unavoidable, wrote a most pathetic letter, praying that he might not die the death of a common malefactor, but by a mode more befitting a soldier. Even this small boon was refused to a generous enemy, by the inexorable rigour of stern republicanism. On the 22d of October, the ill-fated hero met his death, with a composure, serenity, and fortitude, worthy of conscious innocence suffering unmerited punishment.

Thus fell the gallant Andre, losing his life for loyalty and patriotically endeavouring to serve his king and country. If criminality is to be estimated by intention, he was put to death without any proofs of guilty design, and with the strongest presumptions of innocence. Such relentless, inhuman rigour could answer no purpose of policy, as it certainly neither enhanced the character, nor promoted the interest, of the Americans; it was evidently the effect of revenge, and of revenge foiled in its principal object. Andre suffered for the defection of Arnold. Had that general been caught, and undergone the punishment due to treachery, the impartial reader would not perhaps have blamed the sentence, and might have considered that as justice to a traitorous friend, which he must reprobate as cruelty to a fair and generous foe.*

The death of Andre, which Washington could have easily prevented, will certainly in future ages be regarded as a dark spot in the bright character of the American general. Arnold published a declaration of his motives for leaving the service of America, consisting chiefly of invectives against his late associates, which, whether true or false, had, coming from him, the less weight, that the character of the Americans, now the object of his reprobation, was identically the same as before, when the object of his panegyric. Winter now approaching, and the count de Guichen not having arrived from the West Indies, both parties, after concluding an agreement for the exchange of prisoners, retired into quarters. For the prevention of Guichen's arrival in North America, we are to find the causes in the transactions of the West Indies.

Sir George Rodney having, as we have seen, left Gibraltar in February, and sailed for the West Indies, had arrived at St. Lucia, and taken the command of the fleet upon the leeward island station by the latter end of March. Just previous to his arrival, M. de Guichen, with twenty-five ships of the line, and eight frigates, all full of troops, had paraded for several days before that island, with a view either of surprising or of overwhelming the British force by their great superiority. The good disposition of the troops made by general Vaughan and of the ships by rear-admiral Parker, however, frustrated their design. Sir George Rodney, with twenty ships of the line, and the Centurion of fifty guns, followed the French fleet into Martinique, and offered them battle; but the enemy, notwithstanding the superiority of their numbers, would not venture to engage. To entice the enemy to leave the harbour, the British admiral retired to Gross Islet Bay in St. Lucia, leaving swift sailing frigates to watch their motions, and convey to him intelligence. On the 16th of April, Guichen sailed with his fleet; the following day Rodney came in sight of the enemy late in the evening, and found them disposed to avoid an engagement. He watched them with such vigilance as to prevent

* Stedman, vol. ii. p. 332.

[New plan of attack by breaking the enemy's line.]

their escape. The next morning, the French admiral made very masterly dispositions for avoiding an engagement: this the British commander counteracted with equal nautical skill and professional ability, which at last rendered a battle unavoidable.

In forming the line of battle, the long established mode was, when fleets were nearly equal in number, to oppose ship to ship, by which means superior force and seamanship prevailed, without any extraordinary efforts of naval ability or conduct. Rodney possessed not only that professional experience, guided by which brave men fight in the way in which brave men have fought before, but a comprehensive genius, which could adopt measures to existing cases, and leave precedent when novelty tended more effectually to secure the object. The enemy being considerably superior in number, he proposed not to attack the whole at once, but with all his force to bear down on a part of theirs, so that by mastering one division, he might easily overpower the rest.* For that purpose he directed his van to attack the hindmost ships of the enemy's centre, and the remainder of his fleet the rear. He also made a general signal to his ships to lie close to the enemy, and take example by the admiral. His fleet being in the proper position for engaging the enemy, according to the plan which he had arranged, he made the signal for every ship to attack her opposite in the enemy's line. The commander of his vanmost ship, a gentleman thoroughly experienced in the precedent mode of tactics, misconceived the admiral's meaning, and supposed his orders to be to steer towards the vanmost ship of the enemy. This misapprehension communicating itself to the succeeding ships, tended to disconcert the masterly design of the admiral. His orders were not fully regarded in another particular: he had given, and had been obliged to repeat his signal for lying close to the enemy. Several ships of his fleet kept at so great a distance, as not to second and support the admiral. The admiral's own ship, however, and some others, did very great execution; but the deviation from his orders, both as to plan and nearness, prevented a decisive issue to an engagement, for, and in which the commander had used every effort of design and execution which could lead to victory.

The French fleet was beaten from the scene of action: Rodney pursued them as soon as the crippled state of the ships that had engaged according to his orders, and the arrival of others in their proper position, permitted. Such despatch was used to repair the damaged ships, that on the 20th they again descried the enemy, but not in sufficient time to prevent them from taking refuge under Gaudaloupe. In the beginning of May, the French fleet again sailed; and on the 10th, it was seen by the British a few leagues to windward. The enemy having the advantage of the wind, were able either to hazard or to avoid an engagement at pleasure, but chose the latter alternative. Rodney endeavoured to

* The examiner of the naval tactics which Rodney introduced, and which he himself in the last war, and others in the present, have practised with such terrible effect and glorious success, will see that it proceeded on the same principle that regulated the military tactics formed and exercised by the illustrious Frederick: and which produced the systems and movements of the Macedonian Philip, and his preceptor Epaminondas. The battle of Leuctra was gained by the masterly skill of the Theban hero directing his whole force on a part of the enemy's with such disposition and compactness as to break their line. See description of the battle of Leuctra, Gillies's History of Greece, vol. iii. p. 368.

[French disappointed in the chief objects of the campaign.]

gain the lee-gage, but was not able to succeed. By feigning flight, on the 15th, he had almost drawn the enemy to battle; but after a partial cannonade between the extreme ships of the respective fleets, the enemy retired without a general battle. On the 19th, admiral Rodney endeavoured to turn the fleet of the enemy; and from his movements both parties became so entangled as to render a conflict unavoidable between the British van and the enemy's rear. The enemy having suffered considerable loss, bore away to Martinique. Rodney repaired to Carlisle Bay in Barbadoes, to refit his shattered ships. In these conflicts the French evinced themselves considerably improved in naval warfare, and our ships were much damaged in the repeated encounters; but the very object of their improved attack manifested conscious inferiority. Their chief purpose was to aim at our rigging, and thereby avoid CLOSE FIGHT, WHICH UNIFORM EXPERIENCE HAS TAUGHT EVERY OPPONENT OF THE ENGLISH NAVY TO SHUN, IF THEY WOULD AVOID DESTRUCTION. Spain sent a considerable naval force to join her ally in the West Indies; and thus recruited, the Bourbon fleet amounted to thirty-six ships of the line, a force that apparently must be able to overwhelm the British West Indies; but this ostensible accession of strength proved eventual weakness: the Spanish troops were too much crowded on board their transports: that circumstance co-operating with the length of the voyage, the change of climate and diet, and above all, their peculiar laziness and want of cleanliness, the whole of those combined causes generated a mortal and contagious distemper, which first infecting their own seamen, at length spread, though not entirely with so fatal an effect, through the French fleet and land forces. The pestilential disease still continuing, prevented the French from profiting by their fleet. The Spanish admiral proceeded to the westward, and, having parted with the French at St. Domingo, went on to the Havannah. Besides the infectious disorder, there appeared to be a want of concert between the armaments of the two allies, which very greatly obstructed their schemes for annoying Britain. Part of the French plan of operations had been, after the expected reduction of the British power in the West Indies by the combined forces, that their fleet should proceed to New-York, and in conjunction with the Americans and the French ships and army, who were there before, should capture New-York, and drive the British from America. But after the first of these projects had failed, Guichen considering his former disappointments, the present state of his army, of his ships and men, found the expedition utterly impracticable, and proceeded directly to Europe. Rodney, aware of the original design, and on the departure of Guichen conceiving that he was bound for New-York, sailed himself for the same place, where he thought his assistance would be so much wanted; but finding his services not necessary in that quarter, he returned in the close of the year to St. Lucia. Besides the operations between the fleets of the belligerent powers during this campaign, various conflicts took place among single ships, both in Europe and the West Indies, which did signal honour to the courage and skill of both parties, but in the result of every action manifested the superiority of Britain upon her own element.

CHAP. XXVI.

Proceedings against the rioters.—Lord Loughborough's charge to the grand jury—difference of opinion on the construction of Edward III.'s treason statute—legal authorities not altogether conformable to statutory definition—literal and free interpreters of statutes—lord Loughborough follows high authorities.—No grounds for the charge of rigorous severity against the rioters.—Political effects of the riots.—General election—contest for Westminster.—Mr. Fox is chosen on the 10th of October, which thenceforward is consecrated to anniversary celebration.—Continental affairs—the character of Joseph opens—he aspires at the possession of Bavaria—is opposed by Frederick.—Hostilities between Prussia and Austria—are terminated by the peace of Teschen.—Continental powers are jealous of British commercial and naval greatness.—Conduct of Russia—armed neutrality—real objects of.—State and interest of Holland.—Holland favours the revolted colonies—remonstrances of Britain.—Discovery of a treaty between the Dutch and the Americans—rupture with Holland—the Dutch are the aggressors.—Meeting of parliament—choice of a speaker—King's speech.—Mr. Fox's plan of attack against ministers—he begins with charges against lord Sandwich—his motion concerning the appointment of sir Hugh Palliser.—Mr. Burke resumes his plan of economical reform.—Beginnings of lord Chatham's second son, Mr. William Pitt.—The celebrated comic poet, Sheridan, turns his extraordinary talents to politics.—India affairs are extensively considered in parliament—two committees of inquiry are appointed—one has for its chairman Mr. Henry Dundas.—Questions for future deliberation respecting India, proposed by lord North.—Petitions from counties for redress of grievances.—Different opinions of Messrs. Fox and Burke on the marriage law.—Supplies.—Extravagant terms of the noted loan of twelve millions.—Lord North, incorrupt himself, permits wasteful corruption in others—inefficacy, in arduous situations, of talents and benevolent dispositions, without firmness of resolution.—Session rises.

Two internal subjects principally attracted the public attention during the recess of 1780; the trial of the rioters and the general election. Persons accused of tumults committed within the county of Middlesex and the city of London, were arraigned at Hicks's hall; and bills being found for felony, either in robbery or arson, they were tried at the Old Bailey. The judge had not thought it necessary, in addressing the grand jury, to be peculiarly minute in explaining the law applicable to crimes which came so frequently under their consideration; and though well adapted to his view of the subject, the charge delivered no doctrines that particularly deserve historical record. Eighty-five persons being indicted, forty-three were acquitted, and forty-two capitally convicted; but of the condemned, twelve obtained mercy.*

For trying persons alleged to have committed outrages in the county of Surrey, a special commission was appointed to sit at St. Margaret's Hill in the Borough; and the first nominee was Alexander Wedderburn, who was recently promoted to be lord chief justice of the common pleas, and called to the house of peers by the title of lord Loughborough. The persons here presented were accused of treason, and the judge delivered to the grand jury a charge, which the magnitude of the crime imputed,

*See Annual Register, 1780; Appendix to Chronicle, p. 271—277.

[Difference of opinion respecting Edward III.'s treason statute.]

the doctrines promulgated, the high character of the speaker, and the splendid oratory of this exertion, combined in very strongly impressing on the public attention.

The learned reader must know that a very material difference subsists between the law of treason as it is expressed by the statute of Edward III. on the one hand, and on the other interpreted by lawyers and judges.* The two chief species contained in the celebrated law of Edward are, to compass or intend the king's death; or to levy war against his person and government. But lawyers, partly desirous of paying court to the sovereign, and partly convinced that such narrow limitations of legal definition may often screen enormous guilt, had introduced a greater latitude. They observed, that if a man should enter into a conspiracy for rebellion, fix a correspondence with foreign powers for that purpose, or even plot the overthrow of the existing constitution, if he was detected, and no rebellion or insurrection ensued, by the letter of this statute, he could not be convicted of treason. To prevent this inconvenience they had commonly laid their indictment for intending the death of the king, and had produced the intention of rebellion as a proof of the other intention, and thus confounded the two species of treason, which the statute had accurately distinguished;† whereas the law had made only one kind of *intentional treason*, a purpose to put the king to death; the lawyers had made two, a design to levy war or rebel. It was frequently alleged, that by such an interpretation, lawyers and judges assuming to themselves a legislative authority, which is not vested in them by the constitution of their country, exercised it in extending penal law, and rendering designs capital that were not legally criminal. The object of this constructive interpretation was no doubt so far laudable; in estimating criminality, they proposed to take into the account moral depravity and political mischief, and to provide against new devices of flagitious ingenuity; but on the other hand, the admission of such constructions might be abused to the most oppressive and tyrannical purposes.‡ There were always in Rome,§ and have been and are in England, two classes of interpreters of law, the literal and the free; or, in the language of professional men, the arguers from law and from equity.|| Persons early instructed in the civil law have more frequently belonged to the latter class than the former. This was the case with lord Loughborough, who has, on all great questions, shown himself a liberal rather than a literal interpreter. He in this charge proceeded according to the practice of lawyers, and opinions of judges; and on this sanction he supported the constructive doctrine, instead of the precise definition, of legislature. Arguing on the *authority* of Fortescue, sir Matthew Hale, and other luminaries of judicial history, he stated, that every insurrection which, in the judgment of the law, is in-

* See Blackstone, vol. iv. p. 74—93.

† Most of these observations are either extracted from, or suggested by Hume's account of the trial of lord Russell.

‡ The danger of departure from established law, to punish even the most atrocious culprits, is perhaps no where more ably exhibited, than in Cæsar's speech on the discovery of Catiline's conspiracy, as presented by Sallust.

§ See Gibbon's account of the Sabinians and Proculians, in his view of the Justinian code. Vol. vi.

|| In the parting view of the illustrious Mansfield, I endeavour to state the separate and comparative advantages and disadvantages of these two modes of interpretation.

[Political effects of the riots. General election.]

tended against the person of the king, be it to dethrone* or imprison him, or to oblige him to alter his measures of government, or to remove evil counsellors from about him, amounts to levying war within the statute, whether attended with the pomp and circumstances of open war or not; and every conspiracy to levy war for these purposes, though not treason within the clause of levying war, is yet an overt act within the other clause of compassing the king's death. Some lawyers contended, that it was not consistent with legal propriety, to rest opinions on the authority of the judges, when they contravened an express statute; and that the substitution of a judge's opinion for the enactment of a legislative assembly, was changing judges into lawgivers.

The judge did not escape without censure for the doctrines which his address contained; and persons who hastily examined his conduct, deemed him severe and sanguinary; but for that blame just grounds are not to be found either in his charge or proceedings. Whether it be constitutionally right that treason is to be ascertained by judicial interpretation, it is historically true that such has been the mode usually adopted by the most reputed judges on criminal trials: lord Loughborough therefore merely applied the rules and followed the example of his eminent predecessors. As the insurrection had been very atrocious, severe punishment was a requisite sacrifice to justice, order and tranquillity; but so far was the judge from the superfluous rigour which was imputed to him, that he recommended to mercy such of the guilty as had extenuating circumstances in their favour. It may be farther observed, that whether the construction of the judge concerning the guilt of a conspiracy to levy war were or were not just, no one was condemned who had not been found guilty of actual insurrection and rebellion against the king and government. His constructive treason therefore produced no effects to the accused, which would not have arisen from the most rigid interpretation. Forty-three were tried, of whom twenty-six were found guilty and the rest acquitted.†

The riots, which were thus effectually suppressed, really strengthened administration: the scenes of enormity which were exhibited in the metropolis struck men with horror, and by a natural, though an erroneous effect, inspired a general dread of popular meetings, however legal or peaceable. These dispositions reached to the country meetings, petitions, and associations, and consequently to all applications for redress of grievance, and schemes for a reform in parliament.

The capture of Charleston, of which the news arrived soon after the riots, tended to erase the memory of past disappointments in the war, and to revive the sanguine hopes of the speedy subjugation of the colonies. The victory of Rodney, which had opened the naval campaign, succeeded by the stationary inaction of the French and Spanish fleets in Europe, joined to the little achievements of their mighty force in the West Indies, gratified the national pride and cherished the hopes that the house of Bourbon would severely pay for the temerity of the attempt to wrest from Britain the dominion of the sea. Many who formerly reprobed the war, and condemned the measures and principles in which it originated, forgot their disapprobation when they saw or thought that

* See charge, Annual Register, 1780, p. 281.

† See Annual Register, 1780, p. 283--287.

[Affairs of the continent. Views of the emperor.]

it was likely to have a prosperous issue; and the influence and authority of the crown were more spread, and better fixed than they had been for several years. In this state of things, and disposition of the people, ministers conceived the season peculiarly favourable to a new election. The parliament had already sitted six years, and if it continued to the seventh, at the expiration of that time circumstances might be by no means so auspicious. Having resolved on the measure, they gave no intimation of their intention, until they thought it ripe for execution; but their plan being matured, on the 1st of September a proclamation was issued for dissolving the parliament. Besides the prevalence of a spirit so favorable to the ministerial party, there was another circumstance which tended to promote their success in the new election: various members of opposition, tired with long disappointment, began to consider their efforts useless, and determined to decline being candidates for again sitting in the legislature. From these different causes, the election of 1780 afforded much fewer disputes than any which had taken place from the beginning of the reign. Among the most warmly contested was the city of Westminster, for which two candidates contended, lord Lincoln and Mr. Fox, and the great champion of opposition was elected by a numerous majority on the 10th of October, a day ever since deemed worthy of anniversary celebration by those politicians who identify the conduct of the orator with the principles of the British constitution, and consecrated to remembrance as an epoch in the history of modern whiggism triumphant. The new parliament was summoned to meet on the 31st of October; but before our narrative follows its deliberations, it must exhibit a short view of foreign interests and affairs, which relating to Britain, very early occupied its attention and deliberation.

Though Britain, during the American war, had less connexion with continental powers than at any other period of this last century, yet her contest with her colonies was a subject of the most interesting concern to the neighbouring nations. During a great part of the war, tranquillity prevailing in the northern and eastern states of Europe, allowed them an almost undivided attention to the contest between Britain and America. The only interruption of the peace of Germany and Russia arose from a dispute about the electorate of Bavaria. The king of Prussia had in a few years improved his share of the Polish spoils to the highest advantage, and greatly meliorated the condition of recent as well as hereditary subjects: indeed, though his warmest admirers must admit that his ambition often violated justice in acquiring dominions, his severest enemies must allow, that he rendered his acquisitions more beneficial, and their inhabitants happier, than he found them when they became subjects to his government. The emperor Joseph was equally ambitious, but much inferior in wisdom of plan, or in steadiness of execution. On the death of the elector of Bavaria, this prince attempted to revive obsolete claims to the reversion of his dominions; and in the beginning of 1778, actually marched troops towards Munich, and dispossessed the elector palatine, the real heir, of the whole of that territory. Frederick justly considered this step as a violation of the Germanic constitution, and determined without delay to resist such an encroachment. He knew that notwithstanding his alliance with Austria, cemented by the recent affiance of the royal families, France would regard with jealousy such an accession to the emperor's power; but engaged in schemes of maritime ag-

[Peace of Teschen. Continental powers jealous of Great Britain.]

grandizement, would not employ any effectual efforts. He himself therefore saw that the protection of Bavaria must rest chiefly on his policy and power; and before he would interrupt the improvement of his kingdom by drawing the sword, he tried negotiation, opened a correspondence with the emperor, and professed a disposition to listen to his claims, to learn their extent and validity, and to admit them if they should prove well founded. The Austrian pretensions were so very weak, that even the ability of Kaunitz could not render them plausible, or prevent easy refutation. The empress queen, evidently convinced that her son's demands were ill founded, and that assertion would be impolitic, was pacifically disposed, but her son was resolved to maintain them by force, and encouraged in his obstinacy by his ministers, who chose to worship the rising sun. Frederick engaged the empress Catharine to second his opposition to the aspiring views of Joseph, and convinced her that it was the interest of the Russians to hinder the emperor, who was only entitled to be the first prince in Germany, from governing that great empire with despotic authority. Finding that the Austrian prince had collected large bodies of troops from Italy, Flanders, and Hungary, in Bohemia, he drew a no less formidable force to his own frontiers. Joseph, in a letter, endeavoured to justify his claims by arguments; but soon finding, in the answer of Frederick, that he had to contend with a logician very superior to himself, he was mortified, and sent an angry reply, expressing his disposition to take a lesson from Frederick in the art of war.* To this effusion of galled pride, the hero sent a wise, temperate, and firm answer;† and finding hostilities unavoidable, with his usual ability he formed a comprehensive scheme to annoy his antagonist in various quarters; with his usual rapidity he commenced his operations, and established a decisive superiority over the arms of Joseph. Catharine meanwhile, with a view to obtain influence in the empire by espousing its cause, sent a considerable body of troops to join Frederick. Maria Theresa strongly urged her son to peace; but having conceived the hopes of rekindling the war between Turkey and Russia, and thus having himself only to contend with Prussia, he would listen to no proposals. At last, however, in spring 1779, learning that Russia had entirely composed her differences with Turkey, and was preparing a great army to co-operate with Frederick, he became accessible to pacific propositions. A congress was held at Teschen: Frederick, equally triumphant in the cabinet as in the field, without ostentatiously dictating, actually framed the terms. Joseph acknowledged the right of the elector palatine as heir to the sovereignty of Bavaria, renounced his claims, and virtually confessed that he had been disturbing the peace of Germany without tenable grounds. Commercial advantages in the last century transcended not only the experience, but even the imagination of former times, and rendered the formation and extension of mercantile establishments, and a marine force, one of the primary objects of policy with European nations: a natural, though not a wise concomitant of the desire of such a source of benefit, is jealousy of a state that possesses it in a superior degree. Envy the pre-eminence of Britain, maritime potentates anxiously beheld the progress of a quarrel by which they conceived her naval superiority must be con-

* Gillies's Frederick, p. 476.

† Frederick's manifesto, state papers, July 7, 1778.

[Conduct of Russia. Armed neutrality.]

siderably impaired. The most powerful of these states formed the vain hope of dispossessing Britain of her supremacy, and with that view, by unprovoked aggression, involved us in war. The other naval states did not openly combine with the house of Bourbon, but secretly favoured both those nations, and the colonies revolted from Britain. Deeply indebted to this country for maritime support and accommodation during her war with Turkey, Russia had been among the first to act hostilely herself, and encouraged others to enmity.

By the received law of nations in modern Europe, when a war broke out between any of the powers, on the one hand neutral states were not to be interrupted in their general trade with the belligerent parties, but on the other hand were to convey to neither, naval or military stores. Russia, Denmark, Sweden, and Holland, entered into an association for promoting a scheme which altered the public law concerning the right of neutral states to convey warlike stores. This was the treaty concluded at Copenhagen on the 19th of July, 1780, under the name of the ARMED NEUTRALITY.* The professed object of this combination was to protect, by an armed force, every species of neutral trade. The treaty set out with declaring, that the contracting parties entertained the most cordial amity for the several belligerent powers, and professed the strictest impartiality. It declared, they would carry on no contraband trade: but narrowed this definition into literal interpretation, and designedly omitted the spirit and object. They founded the asserted privilege of carrying what commodities they chose to the warring powers, not upon the EXISTING LAW OF NATIONS, but upon *natural-right*: neutral ships were not to be searched without a material and well grounded cause, of which the contracting parties were to be the sole judges. The associated powers engaged to protect neutral trade, and reciprocally, severally, and jointly, to maintain a force for that purpose. They declared, that an injury done to any one of them as a neutral trader, should be accounted an injury done to all; and that, both jointly and severally, unless it was redressed, they should issue orders for reprisals. The association was to continue during the war, and should notify to the belligerent powers the existence of the treaty, its objects, and their resolutions to employ force for its support. Every person acquainted with the maritime force and situation of the several nations, clearly perceived that this plan, ostensibly impartial, was really meant to injure Britain. As the principal articles of warlike, especially naval stores, came from Norway and the Baltic, England, from her local situation, had the means of intercepting such commodities much more than her southern enemies; she had also a superior maritime force; a much greater proportion of naval stores could be carried into Britain in her ships, than to Spain, or even to France, in their ships: the conveyance of stores, therefore, in neutral bottoms, was a greater advantage to her enemies than to Britain; they would reap the beneficial fruits from the neutral association, while Britain would lose in the same proportion that her enemies gained. The contracting parties could not but see that this compact was injurious to Britain, therefore their intentions must have been inimical.

Britain considered this convention as a proof of unfriendly dispositions and designs in all the parties; but a variety of other causes combined to

* See state papers, July 1780.

[State and interest of Holland.]

aggravate her displeasure towards the United Provinces. That the reader may have a complete view of the dispute between Great Britain and Holland, it is necessary to consider, not only recent, but distant portions of history, as the proximate causes of quarrel originated in very remote circumstances. From the first establishment of the Dutch commonwealth, two parties existed which alternately predominated. The one consisted of the adherents of the princes of Orange, the first champions and successful vindicators of their rights and liberties; the other, of those who either by birth inherited, or by fortune or merit acquired, rank and influence. Gratitude for recent delivery was about to confer on William I. prince of Orange, a limited hereditary sovereignty, when assassination prevented the design from being accomplished.† Maurice, his son and successor in the stadtholdership, being then a boy, could not profit by the occasion while it lasted, and notwithstanding the splendour of his subsequent exploits, the services which he performed, and the prosperity and glory to which he raised the republic, was never able to recover the opportunity. He and his successors naturally looked back with regret to that sovereignty which they had almost obtained, and endeavoured to enlarge to the utmost extent their official powers as stadtholders. The principal citizens, on the other hand, who had grown up along with the fortune of the state, not only opposed their designs, but endeavoured to limit their power, which they considered as becoming dangerous to public liberty, and inimical to the principles of the constitution. The bitterness of such a contest soon effaced from the minds of the nobles all the signal benefits which had been conferred on the state by the successive heroes of the Orange family. Great generals seemed no longer necessary in a season of peace and prosperity: nor did it follow, because it had hitherto so proved, that every prince of Orange was to be an illustrious captain; therefore the aristocratic party proposed the total abolition of the office of stadtholder, and the distribution of its various powers among their own leaders. Such was the origin and foundation of that republican faction which is distinguished in the history of Holland, and which, under various denominations, subsisted from the days of prince Maurice and Barneveldt to modern times. It was the constant and obvious policy of France to maintain her influence in the councils of Holland, and at the same time, to restrain and weaken, as much as possible, the power and political activity of the republic. The princes of the house of Orange were generally inimical to the views of France, and linked by blood and alliance with Britain. This state of affairs occasioned a permanent enmity between France and the house of Orange, and naturally produced an intimate connexion between that monarch and the aristocratic party. France diligently cultivated her influence with the anti-stadtholderian faction of Holland. William III. succeeded to the stadtholderate when he was only a child; and during his minority, the nobles, under the name of the Louvestein party, became extremely powerful, and being headed by the celebrated de Wit, were able totally to abolish the office: the violent irruption of Louis XIV. into Holland, however, prompted the states to raise to power the party and individual most inimical to France, and most able to repress the unjustifiable ambition of that aspiring neighbour. The delivery of his

* See Watson's History of Philip II.

[She favours the revolted colonies.]

country by William III.; the very high character and great influence of that prince, which was increased by his power from the time he became king of England; the resentment of the Dutch against the French; and their alarm from the ambitious politics of Louis; repressed the party which derived its chief support from Gallic policy. On the death of William III. the stadtholderate became extinct, the states not choosing to renew it in favour of that part of his family which had succeeded to the title of Orange as well as to the principal part of his inheritance. Union, however, of views and interests with England, in repelling the ambition of the French, and opposing the succession of a Bourbon prince to the throne of Spain, rendered the states-general no less inimical to Louis, and friendly to England and the emperor, than they had been when William governed both countries: and the ability and address of Marlborough procured such personal influence with the states-general, that the French party was not able to defeat the measures of the grand alliance. Towards the end of queen Ann's reign, the Dutch were closely connected with the anti-gallican party in England; but during the peace, which lasted for so many years after the treaty of Utrecht, the French party in Holland appears to have gained ground. The co-operation of the Dutch with Britain and the house of Austria in the war which commenced in 1740, was very inefficient; and to the influence of the partisans of France may, in a great degree, be ascribed that failure of Dutch exertion, which prevented the extraordinary efforts of the British troops from being victorious at Fontenoy. The same want of cordiality in the cause was obvious in other actions, particularly in the battle of Lauffelt. In consequence of their victories, the French penetrated into Dutch Flanders, and prepared to descend on the island of Zealand. Perceiving the danger which impended from the progress of the French, the Dutch determined to have recourse to a measure that had formerly saved them from ruin, and to declare the prince of Orange stadtholder. In the year 1748, the office was renewed in full plenitude of power in favour of the late prince of Orange, with the additional security of being rendered hereditary not only in the male, but the female lines of his family. This settlement appeared to cut off entirely the views of the adverse faction; but though depressed, or at least withheld from any means of political exertion, they were still potent and numerous, and only waited for a favourable opportunity which should operate as a signal for union and exertion. The prince of Orange dying in 1751, and leaving his son, the present prince, a child of three years old, the long minority much weakened the influence of the stadtholderian party, and the Gallican faction became powerful. At the commencement of the seven years war, Britain claimed six thousand men, who had been promised as auxiliaries by a defensive treaty; but the Dutch refused to comply, and became the carriers of contraband goods with impunity, until Mr. Pitt was raised to the head of affairs. They even privately co-operated with our French enemies, while a French party openly avowed its enmity to this country. The French interest having rapidly advanced during the non-age, continued to be very powerful even during the administration, of the present prince, and used every artifice to inflame the jealousy of the Dutch against the great naval power, and particularly the increase of commerce, which Britain had attained.

Such was the state of parties and sentiments in Holland, when war

[Discovery of a treaty between the Dutch and Americans.]

broke out between this country and her colonies. From the beginning of the contest the Dutch had secretly favoured America, but became more open in assistance as the fortune of England began to decline, and as her enemies multiplied. Holland protected American ships when laden with plunder taken from British merchants, and even suffered a provincial pirate to take refuge in the Texel; in the East and West Indies she assisted our enemies, and in America our revolted subjects. In Europe, contrary both to the general law of nations and to specific treaties, she conveyed warlike stores to our enemies. Holland had sent an armed force to prevent our ships from acting, according to the law of nations, and the spirit and letter of particular treaties, in searching ships which should be suspected of carrying warlike stores. Her admiral, count Bylund, fired upon British ships that were sent to examine her vessels in the manner prescribed by the treaty of 1674; and various amicable representations and remonstrances were made by Great Britain* to the states-general, but without effect. Great Britain, when pressed by so many enemies, demanded the succours which were stipulated by different treaties, and especially that of 1716,† but obtained no satisfactory answer. All these circumstances, combined with her accession to the armed neutrality, not only indicated, but manifested, in the republic, a disposition hostile to her natural ally and most liberal benefactor.

An incident now happened, which discovered to what extent the enmity of this pretended friend was carried: Mr. Henry Laurens, late president of the American congress, had been appointed ambassador to Holland, and was captured in a Philadelphia ship in the beginning of September on the banks of Newfoundland by a British frigate. The package which contained his papers had been thrown overboard, but its bulk preventing it from suddenly sinking, it was saved by the boldness and dexterity of a British seaman, and most of the papers recovered from the effects of the water. Mr. Laurens being brought to England, was committed on a charge of high treason. When interrogated, he made no answer to any question of importance, but his papers were sufficiently explicit. A treaty of amity and commerce between America and Holland appeared to have been in agitation for more than two years, and Mr. Laurens was to bring the same to a conclusion. The negotiators on the side of Holland, were M. Van Burkel, pensionary and counsellor to the city of Amsterdam, (an officer of great weight and power,) with other members of the registry, assisted by some great commercial houses of that city. Sir Joseph Yorke, the British ambassador at the Hague, was immediately instructed how to proceed: he accordingly expostulated in strong memorials to the states-general, and represented to them the clandestine correspondence which Amsterdam had long been carrying on with rebels against a sovereign to whom the republic was joined in the strictest ties of friendship. He therefore demanded, in the name of the king his master, not only a formal disavowal of so irregular a conduct, but insisted on speedy satisfaction adequate to the offence, and the punishment of the pensionary Van Burkel and his accomplices,

* See the correspondence between British ministers, the ambassador sir Joseph Yorke, and the Dutch; state papers, 1780.

† See Chalmers' Collection of Treaties,

[Rupture with Holland. Parliament. Speech of the king.]

as disturbers of the public, and violators of the rights of nations. To this remonstrance an immediate answer not having been given, its substance was repeated in still stronger terms, accompanied by the following intimation: "His majesty, by the complaints made through his ambassador, has placed the punishment and the reparation in the hands of your high mightinesses; and it will not be until the last extremity, that is to say, in case of a denial of justice, or of silence, which must be interpreted as a refusal, that the king will take them upon himself."* Here one nation complained to another of an injury received from subjects of that other, and demanded public disavowal and punishment of the aggressors. It rested with the other nation, either to disavow the act and punish the actors, or by refusing satisfaction justify what had been done. The latter alternative the states-general chose; they did not answer the memorial, and thus compelled the British sovereign to seek by force that redress which peaceable application could not obtain. Sir Joseph Yorke received orders to withdraw from the Hague; and that step was followed before the close of the year, by a declaration of hostilities against Holland. Manifestoes followed from both parties; but, on considering the whole circumstances of the case, an impartial reader can entertain no doubt that the Dutch were the aggressors.

On the 31st of October parliament met, and before they proceeded to business, ministers proposed a new speaker. Sir Fletcher Norton had frequently thwarted and censured administration and given umbrage to the court party; but he excited the greatest displeasure in 1777, when, on presenting bills for paying the civil list debts, he made a speech enlarging on the munificence of the commons, and recommending economy in the management of their gift. Ministers considering such an adviser as by no means proper for being speaker of the house, embraced the earliest possible opportunity of dismissing him from that office. With this view they praised the firmness, prudence, and diligence, with which he had discharged his laborious duties, but lamented that his ardent zeal and indefatigable efforts had very much impaired his constitution: actuated by a grateful regard to the ease and health of so valuable a member, the house, according to ministers, ought to relieve him from so troublesome an employment, and substitute a more able-bodied man to preside over the commons. They therefore recommended Mr. Cornwall, as a gentleman in every other respect qualified for the speaker's chair, and also possessing sufficient corporeal vigour. Opposition expressed the greatest contempt for the ridiculous farce that ministers were acting, and imputed the proposed dismissal to ministerial resentment on account of sir Fletcher's upright conduct. On a division, the nomination of Mr. Cornwall was carried by a majority of 203 to 134.

His majesty's speech, after expressing confidence in the loyal and patriotic dispositions and wishes of his people, described the mighty efforts of France and Spain to support the American rebellion, and destroy the commerce and reduce the power of Britain; the glorious efforts and brilliant successes of the British arms by sea and land, which had frustrated the designs, and disappointed the expectations of our enemies; and his confidence, that continuance in these exertions would bring the

* See state papers from Nov. 18, to Dec. 22, 1780, relative to a rupture with Holland.

[Charges brought by Mr. Fox against lord Sandwich.]

war to a happy conclusion. After the repetition of reiterated arguments against the origin and conduct of the American war, opposition descended to the events of the last campaign, and insisted that, though the victories were most splendidly honourable to the British forces, they did not, in the result, advance the ministerial object of conquering America. They had often predicted, that certain successful operations would terminate the war; but as often as the predictions were made, they were falsified. British soldiers and sailors fought valiantly in the year 1780, as they had always fought; they had gained battles and taken towns, but to what purpose? Could any man say, that the conquest of America was less distant, than when we had driven our colonies to revolt?

Mr. Fox resuming his usual function of accusing ministers, gave notice that he should after the holidays move, first, for the dismissal of the earl of Sandwich; and then for bringing him to condign punishment: that he should found the motions on two different causes; for advising his majesty to promote sir Hugh Palliser to the government of Greenwich Hospital; and for the shameful neglect of the navy. Sir Hugh Palliser had not taken his seat as member for Huntingdon, when Mr. Fox intimated his intention of censuring his recent appointment; but being informed of this intimation, he speedily repaired to the house, in order personally to support his own cause. The 4th of December being the day appointed to take the navy estimates into consideration, it was presumed that Mr. Fox would embrace the opportunity of attacking the conduct and late appointment of Palliser; that gentleman therefore resolved to appear in vindication of his character. Mr. Fox commenced his attack: sir Hugh Palliser (he said) had been convicted of a false and malicious accusation against his superior officer, and on charges exhibited against himself barely acquitted by a court martial; nevertheless, he was promoted to a post of distinction and profit, which had heretofore been held by men of the first naval merit, and was intended as a reward and a reward to those who had essentially served their country. This appointment, he considered as the highest insult that could be offered to the navy, and the greatest stigma that could be affixed to the service. He did not blame the person who accepted that place, but the first lord of the admiralty, whose conduct in it ought to be the subject of their inquiry. Lord North answered Mr. Fox, and displayed one of his chief parliamentary excellences, ability and readiness of reply. The appointment of sir Hugh Palliser (he said) was not the act of the first lord of the admiralty alone, but of the other ministers also. Mr. Fox's principal objection to the nomination was, that the court-martial upon admiral Keppel had imputed unworthy motives to his accuser. Therein that tribunal had exceeded its jurisdiction; the court did not sit on admiral Palliser, but on admiral Keppel. They had not heard Palliser in his own defence, but pronounced an injurious opinion, without establishing its grounds. The second objection of Mr. Fox was, that sir Hugh Palliser had been barely acquitted; but his interpretation was confuted by the sentence itself, and especially the following words. "The court having taken the whole of the evidence into consideration, both on the part of the prosecution as well as in favour of the prisoner, were of opinion, that the conduct of sir Hugh Palliser was so far from being reprehensible on the 27th and 28th of July, that in many parts it appeared exemplary and highly meritorious." Exemplary conduct meant such as was a

[Mr. Burke resumes his plan of economical reform. Mr. Pitt.]

proper example for other officers to follow, and a fit object for imitation. According to this natural and true construction of the sentence, the minister contended that sir Hugh Palliser was undoubtedly an object of requital; and after his conduct had been declared highly meritorious and exemplary, administration would have been criminally culpable if they had neglected to give a suitable reward. On the 6th of December the recess took place, and parliament did not again meet until the 25th of January. Papers respecting the rupture with Holland were laid before the houses. Ministers entered into a detailed vindication of their proceedings, to prove that the Dutch had violated both general neutrality and particular treaties; they contended, that as we had applied in vain for redress, hostilities were therefore unavoidable. Opposition members, with their usual ingenuity, endeavoured to demonstrate our enemy to be in the right, and the British government to be in the wrong; and for that purpose they contrasted the present system respecting continental connexions, with the policy of former periods since the revolution. Ministers replied, that their object was the same as the purposes of William and Anne, to humble the house of Bourbon; but that the Dutch had, contrary to wisdom and their own interest, changed their measures, and, misled by a factious party, assisted their natural enemies against their natural friends. In answer to fanciful analogies, taken from remote and dissimilar periods of history, and theories built upon these, they referred to the existing case, as proved by authentic documents, to evince that Holland was the aggressor, and by refusing satisfaction, had forced Britain to go to war.

On the 1st of February, Mr. Fox, in pursuance of his notice, moved, that the appointment of sir Hugh Palliser to be governor of Greenwich-hospital, after he had been declared by a court-martial guilty of having preferred a malicious and ill-founded accusation against his commanding officer, was a measure totally subversive of the discipline, and derogatory to the honour of the navy. He exhibited the whole detail of the proceedings by or concerning admirals Keppel and Palliser, with all their consequences, real and supposed, in one view, in order to support by his former arguments the present motion. Ministers having replied by repeating their former reasonings, offered an amendment destructive of the original proposition, and carried it in the affirmative by a majority of two hundred and fourteen to one hundred and forty-nine.

While Mr. Fox was thus eagerly employed in attacking ministry, Mr. Burke again attempted to introduce his plan for financial reform; and from the new parliament professed to expect a support which he had not experienced from the former. The bill itself not being changed since the former year, and the genius of Mr. Burke having then brought forward every important argument that could be adduced, the substance of his reasoning on the present occasion was necessarily similar to his arguments in the preceding session: the bill was thrown out at the second reading, by a majority much smaller than for a long time had usually voted in favour of ministry.

The debate previous to this division, is remarkable for a circumstance distinct from the intrinsic merits of the question; it called forward, for the first time in parliament, the genius of Mr. William Pitt, second son of the illustrious earl of Chatham. At the general election, this youth, in the twenty second year of his age, entered parliament while the expectations of all ranks and parties were aroused in his favour.

[Mr. Sheridan turns his attention to politics. India affairs.]

It was publicly known that his illustrious father had conceived the highest opinion of his talents and acquirements. Lord Chatham had himself inspected the education of his children; and though immersed in public business, under the pressure of age and bodily infirmity, with anxious delight had tutored, formed, and directed the opening understanding of such a promising son. In every stage of his education, young Pitt impressed all those who knew him with admiration of his talents and acquirements. As he advanced in years, he had progressively risen in estimation and was chiefly eminent for masculine strength and compass of intellectual powers, rapidly mastering the various departments of knowledge and science, studying as a scholar, comprehending and generalizing as a philosopher; bold and original in conception, profound in research, indefatigable in application, he had a firmness of temper, which steadily pursued what he perceived to be right, and adhered to his own plans of conduct, undisturbed by the ridicule of frivolity, and unseduced by the allurements of vice. At the university, he was deemed far superior to ordinary men, and as one destined to transcend his contemporaries as much in the highest deliberative and executive departments of public life, as he then surpassed them in the erudition and science of academic retirement. Some of his friends at Cambridge proposed that he should stand candidate for representing the university in parliament, but declining this honour unless unanimously offered, he was returned for Poole. In the speech which he now delivered, Mr. Pitt fully justified the anticipations of the public and was considered from that time as an important accession to parliamentary ability. Although the young orator voted and spoke on the side of opposition, he did not connect himself with any of its members as a party, but, like his renowned father, he trusted entirely to himself, without seeking eminence through the collective influence of a combination. The same session brought another splendid addition to parliamentary genius: Mr. Sheridan, after far surpassing all contemporary writers, and indeed all of the eighteenth century, in comic poetry, first exhibited in the senate that strong, brilliant, and versatile genius, which had acquired the dramatic palm merely because its possessor had chosen that species of intellectual exercise.

Sir Philip Jennings Clerke, notwithstanding his repeated defeats, resumed his design of excluding contractors from a seat in the house. A bill which he brought in for that purpose, was thrown out by a majority of one hundred and twenty to one hundred; and a bill proposed by Mr. Crewe, to restrain revenue officers from voting at elections for members of parliament, met with a similar fate.

India affairs now came before the house: petitions were presented from the natives of Bengal, Bahar, and Orissa, complaining that the supreme court of judicature established by the act of 1773, had greatly exceeded its powers; that it extended its jurisdiction to persons whom it was not the intention of the king and parliament to subject to its decrees; that it had taken cognizance of matters both originally and pending the suit, the exclusive determination of which the petitioners humbly conceived it to have been the intention of the king and parliament to leave to other courts; that the judges considered the criminal law of England as in force and binding upon the natives of Bengal, though utterly repugnant to the laws and customs by which they had formerly been governed. Petitions were presented to parliament by three class-

[Petitions from the counties for the redress of grievances.]

es, who were affected by what they conceived to be an unwarranted assumption of jurisdiction; first, by the governor-general and council; secondly, by the agents of the British subjects; and thirdly, by the East India company. A select committee was, at the instance of gen. Smith, appointed to consider India affairs, and the proposer was nominated chairman. To this committee the petitions were referred: the investigation of their grounds produced a variety of information, which afterwards extended the objects of the inquiry to deliberative and executive acts, as well as judicative, and eventually laid the foundation of a very celebrated prosecution. All parties appeared to agree, that in the imperfect state of their knowledge of facts, it was proper to proceed with great caution and delicacy, yet on a summary review, the chief members of both sides appeared to think, that there were among the company's servants counteracting interests that very materially injured the value of India possessions. The select committee having been appointed in February, had already presented a long report, when intelligence arrived of such a state of affairs in the Carnatic, as induced the minister to propose a secret committee, for the purpose of inquiring into the general management of the state of affairs in India, including the farther investigation of the subjects suggested by the petitions. After some objections from opposition to the secrecy, the motion was carried, a committee was chosen from both sides of the house, and Mr. Henry Dundas appointed chairman. In consequence of the report of the secret committee, a bill was proposed by general Smith, for a new regulation of the supreme judicature in India, which, after some partial changes was passed into a law.

The minister submitted various propositions to the house respecting Indian affairs, but rather as subjects of discussion than as measures for adoption. Of these the most important were, Whether it would be proper to throw the trade to India open; to grant a monopoly to another company; or to bestow a new charter on the present company, and reserve to the public a great share of their profits? Whether it would be proper for the crown to take the territorial possessions and revenues entirely into its own hands, or to leave them to the management of a mercantile company? These topics underwent a variety of discussion, but without producing any efficient resolution during the present session. As themes, however, of reflection and argument, they turned the attention of members to the contemplation of Indian affairs, and prepared them for understanding the nature and tendency of such plans as should be afterwards proposed. Lord North introduced a temporary and short bill, continuing the company's monopoly for a limited time, until a more permanent and comprehensive plan should be formed. By this bill the company was to pay four hundred and two thousand pounds to government, as a share of its past profits, and also an annual sum in future.

In the house of lords the duke of Bolton proposed an inquiry relative to the capture of the East and West India convoy, in the course of which much censure was passed on the general conduct of the navy; but his grace at length withdrew his motion. Although the riots had damped the spirit of association, yet some of the counties continued to associate for the purpose of procuring a redress of grievances, and appointed delegates to give support and efficacy to their acts. These, as acting for their constituents, having assembled, prepared a petition to the house of commons, stating the alleged grievances, and the desired

[Different opinions of Messrs. Fox and Burke on the marriage law.]

redress. There were many who, admitting the existence of them, and the necessity of a remedy, yet totally disapproved of such a convention. The petition was therefore subscribed by three several delegates, in their individual and not their collective capacities. When presented however to parliament, the powers that had been assumed by delegates were the chief subjects of animadversion by the opposers of the petition which was rejected by a majority of two hundred and twelve, to one hundred and thirty-five. The house of commons on this occasion showed a jealous vigilance of an encroachment on the established constitution, by discountenancing a representative system which was formed by detached individuals, and unknown to the laws of the land.

Near the close of the session an inconvenience that had arisen from the marriage act 1751, produced the correction of a clause in that law. It had been enacted; that no marriage could be valid unless it was solemnized in a church or other place wherein the celebration of nuptials was lawful before the act. A pauper, who had been married in a chapel erected after that period, being sent with a large family to the parish wherein he conceived himself entitled to a settlement as a married man, was refused, on the ground that, not having complied with the terms of the statute, he was not a married man. An application was made to the court of king's bench; and the judges, though they lamented the hardness of the case, yet, in conformity to the statute, were under the necessity of justifying the recusants. Through the ignorance or inadvertency of the parties and the clergymen, many marriages were in the same predicament, and great numbers of innocent children, without any immoral conduct or intention on the part of their parents, were bastardized. Lord Beauchamp proposed an act of retrospective operation, legalizing such marriages, and legitimating their issue. So humane and equitable a bill was unanimously and speedily passed. The consideration of this particular clause led many to take a view of the marriage act in general; and among others Mr. Charles Fox, who, employing the arguments that had been used in opposition to the bill in 1751, and especially with distinguished ability by his father, proposed a total repeal of the law, and brought in a bill for that purpose: but it was rejected without a division. Mr. Fox on the occasion viewed the subject in a light rather democratical, considering the inclination of the contracting parties as the sole criterion of proper marriages. His friend Mr. Burke expressed a different opinion, and contended, that during the non-age of parties, the sanction of parents or other nearest relations was requisite in that act, the most important of their lives, as well as in others of less comparative moment. The marriage act (he said) justly hit the medium between close and mischievous restraint, and the former laxity which had been the cause of such disorders, and so many just complaints. Concerning the control to which natural liberty should be subjected for the sake of general expediency, these two illustrious friends manifested, on this incidental occasion, a diversity of opinion, which was not much regarded at the time, but from subsequent proceedings and events has been carefully noted by examiners of the series and system of their respective principles and conduct.

The pecuniary transactions of this year were subjects of the severest animadversion. The supplies were granted without opposition, though not without reproach of ministers, for the uselessness, through their misconduct, of the most lavish grants. Ninety-one thousand seamen were voted, and, including foreign troops, about eighty thousand landmen.

[Extravagant terms for the noted loan of twelve millions.]

The whole amount required for the public service was 22,458,837*l*. To provide so large a sum, besides the ordinary means, with the assistance of contributions from the bank and East India company, twelve millions were raised by a loan. The subscribers to this loan, for every hundred pounds contributed, obtained one hundred and fifty in annuities, after the rate of three per cent. per annum, and an additional twenty-five pounds in an annuity at four per cent. per annum; which rate of interest was to be continued until the annuity should be redeemed. 480,000*l*. were raised by a lottery, the tickets in which were distributed among the subscribers in the proportion of four tickets for every thousand pounds subscribed. By comparing the terms of this loan with the price of the several funds on which it was negotiated, it was immediately seen that subscribers had a gain of more than ten per cent. besides the current interest, and in fact the omnium bore an immediate premium of ten per cent. The bestowal of such very advantageous terms on the subscribers to the loan underwent a severe scrutiny. Mr. Fox inveighed against it, as, in the first place, a much less favourable bargain than might have been obtained. The minister had been offered money to the amount of thirty-eight millions, at five per cent. without any premium, and had chosen to borrow it at sixteen per cent. for the first year, making near six per cent. for ever,* and imposing an unnecessary annuity on this country, of near one hundred thousand pounds. Mr. Fox contended, in very forcible reasoning, that such was not the conduct of a competent and faithful steward; that the minister must either have been grossly ignorant, criminally negligent, or wilfully treacherous to his country. He could not be so ignorant as to suppose it was better to pay six per cent. than five; neither could it be imputed to negligence, because the subscribers were the minister's own particular friends. His favourite contractor, Mr. Atkinson, for one, had the disposal of three millions three hundred thousand, the immediate profit of which was three hundred and thirty thousand pounds. The other shares were also distributed among the minister's adherents. Mr. Fox proposed that the lists of both subscribers and proposers should be laid before the house. Lord North by no means

* Average price of three per cents.	<i>l</i> .	<i>s</i> .	<i>d</i> .
was 58 1-2, therefore 150 was	87	15	0
Four per cents. at 72 1-2, 25 is	18	2	6
Lottery tickets at 12 <i>l</i> 10 <i>s</i> . four			
for 1000 <i>l</i> is 50 <i>l</i> for 100 <i>l</i> .	5	00	0
	110	17	6

The current interest was for each hundred pounds, 4*l*. 10*s*. in the three per cents, 10*l*. in the four, and 13*l* on the lottery tickets; so that the minister paid a premium of near eleven per cent. for borrowing at more than legal interest.

Interest of loan	5	5	0
Interest of premium	0	10	9
	5	15	9

15*s*. 9*d*. beyond legal interest on each 100*l*.

100*l*. 15*s*. 9*d*. 12,000,000*l*. 94,500*l*.

Thus an annuity of 94,500*l*. is forever paid by this country more than was necessary for the same sum of money, if lord North had made the best terms he could for the good of his country.

[Wasteful expenditure of the public money. Session rises.]

consented to the application of this test; cautiously avoiding a detailed answer to Mr. Fox he in general declared that he had made the best bargain he could, but opposed all inquiry into its circumstances. Hurtful, Mr. Fox observed, as the financial waste was to the pecuniary interest of the country, it was still more injurious to political, by feeding corruption already so enormous. Mr. Fox so completely discussed this subject, that though afterwards frequently debated both by the commons and the peers, no new facts or arguments were adduced.

The impartial historian cannot justify the public steward for so prodigal a waste of the public money; but must exhibit the twelve millions loan of 1781 as very inconsistent with the character of an able and upright minister. On the other hand, however, he will not hastily impute such donatives to personal corruption. The individual integrity of lord North has never been impeached; his bitterest political enemies never alleged that there was any defalcation of national treasure for his own use;* but what his own rectitude prevented in himself, his inattention suffered in others. With great talents, and manifold acquirements, of an acute understanding, and benevolent disposition, the minister possessed a constitutional indolence, which when mingled with good nature, often allows to friends and connexions much more indulgence than the stern austerity of rigid morality would permit; and in gratifying the wishes, or promoting the interest of the objects of its attachment, frequently transcends the bounds of duty. From this source probably arose the largesses of a minister, than whom no one did more to serve his friends. At the same time, a considerable portion of his donatives must be imputed to political considerations, to the desire of extending his influence, and fortifying himself against the formidable host by which he was assailed.

On the 18th of July, the session was closed with a speech from the throne, in which the king thanked his parliament for their exertions during so long and important a session. He expressed his satisfaction that, in the midst of the difficulties of so complicated and extensive a war, the ancient spirit of the British nation was not diminished. He approved highly of the consideration that had been bestowed on the affairs of India, and trusted the business would be resumed and completed at their next meeting. "Peace (he concluded) is the earnest wish of my heart, but I have too firm a reliance on the spirit and resources of the nation, and the powerful assistance of my parliament, and the protection of a just and all ruling Providence, to accept any terms and conditions, than such as may consist with the honour and dignity of my crown, and the permanent interest and security of my people."

* Personal enmity, the amiable character of this minister has, I believe, never provoked.

CHAP. XXVII.

East Indies.—Hyder Ally invades the Carnatic—colonel Baillie defeats him, but is drawn into an ambuscade, overpowered by numbers, and destroyed.—Rapid progress of Hyder.—Consternation at Madras—alarm reaches Calcutta.—Sir Eyre Coote sent to command in the Carnatic—comparatively small army.—Plan of operations for 1781.—Successive victories over Hyder.—Coote restores the British affairs in the Carnatic.—Admiral Hughes destroys Hyder's shipping on the Malabar coast—reduces Dutch settlements.—Europe.—Plans of the house of Bourbon when re-enforced by the Dutch.—French invade the island of Jersey—are at first successful, but finally repelled.—Blockade of Gibraltar—British fleet supplies the garrison with provisions—Spaniards resolve to attempt its reduction by storm—immense preparations for this purpose.—General Elliot.—Grand scheme for totally discomfiting the enemy—bold, masterly, and complete disposition—Sally of November 27th—entirely destroys the enemy's preparations.—Darby endeavours to bring the enemy's fleet to battle, but in vain.—The combined fleet of forty-nine ships of the line sails to the channel—British fleet of thirty ships keeps the sea.—The hostile armada, notwithstanding its superiority, will not venture an attack—retires to harbour.—British trade protected.—Admiral Kempenfeldt intercepts a French convoy.—War with Holland.—Action off the Dogger-bank.—Commodore Johnstone's expedition to the Cape of Good Hope—though not entirely successful, captures several valuable prizes.—West Indies.—Tremendous hurricane in the Leeward Islands—in Jamaica—humane endeavours to alleviate the distresses—Campaign opens.—Reduction of St. Eustatius—Holland experiences the folly of going to war with Britain.—De Grasse arrives in the West Indies with a greater fleet than the British.—Admiral Hood, detached by Rodney, offers battle to the French—they will not venture a close engagement, but keep a running fight.—A French armament invades Tobago—small garrison there—character and gallant defence of governor Fergusson—his judicious and kind treatment of his negroes—their gratitude, fidelity, and valour—overpowered by numbers, yields by an honourable capitulation.—Rodney endeavours to meet De Grasse, who avoids an encounter.—Spaniards reduce West Florida.—Last efforts of Britain for the recovery of North America—general misinformation and false conclusions of ministers—magnify every transient success—sanguine hopes from the reduction of Carolina delusive.—Object and plan of the campaign 1781.—Lord Cornwallis begins his march.—Expedition of light troops—defeat of the enterprising and brave Tarleton—disadvantage to the British from this disaster.—Battle of Guilford—Cornwallis successful, but with considerable loss.—Operations of lord Rawdon in Carolina—enterprise, skill, and genius of that commander, but by great superiority of numbers is cut off from communication with Cornwallis—returns to Britain—is succeeded by colonel Stewart, who is obliged to act on the defensive.—Cornwallis enters Virginia—reaches Williamsburgh—opposed by an American and French force—establishes himself at Gloucester, in expectation of co-operation from general Clinton.—French and American army near New-York.—Washington projects to march against Cornwallis, without being followed by Clinton—dexterous stratagem by which he overreaches the British commander—with his army joins the forces in Virginia.—Cornwallis surrounded—expecting succours from Clinton resolves to defend himself to the last—skillful and gallant defence—a French fleet blocks up the river—our brave general still holds out—the garrison fast diminishes—a general assault prepared—finding himself totally unable to resist, lord Cornwallis at length surrenders.

We left Hyder Ally preparing to enter the Carnatic: for this purpose he had collected a mighty army. The force on the Madras establish-
VOL. VII.—73

[Defeat of colonel Baillie by Tippoo Saib.]

ment amounted to about thirty thousand men, but was dispersed at great distances, either in quarters, garrison, or upon various detached services; part was employed on the Malabar coast, and a very valuable detachment was in the Guntoor circar, under the conduct of colonel Baillie. The presidency of Madras was not sufficiently impressed with a sense of the nature and extent of Hyder's designs, and by no means employed prudent precautions to secure passes, and fortify posts, to prevent his inroads. Hyder having made his way through the Ghauts, on the 22d of July 1780, advanced without opposition into the level country, with desolation and terror, while his son, Tippoo Saib, was sent to the northern circars. Hyder Ally besieged the city of Arcot, which its nabob defended in such a manner as to excite great suspicion of his fidelity. Tippoo Saib, advanced with a great body of cavalry upon the northern circars, whilst at the opposite extremity different parties of the enemy were approaching to Madras and the borders of Tinivelly country. Sir Hector Monro, the British general, formed the design of compelling Hyder to raise the siege, and himself effecting a junction with Baillie's detachment, which was marching to the south. Hyder on the approach of Monro's army raised the siege, but occupied such a position as intercepted the communication between colonel Baillie and the main army. Baillie, meanwhile, with a force consisting of above two hundred Europeans and eighteen hundred Sepoys, encountered Tippoo Saib at the head of thirty thousand horse and eight thousand foot, at a place called Perimbaucum,* where he made masterly dispositions to withstand the prodigious superiority of number. After a very severe action the British gained a complete victory, but for want of cavalry were unable to preserve their baggage. Baillie found that from the intervention of Hyder's army he could not make good a junction with general Monro, and at the same time, that it would be impossible long to retain his present post for want of provisions. He sent intelligence of his situation to sir Hector; and colonel Fletcher was despatched to his assistance, who, after narrowly escaping being betrayed by his guides, effected a junction with Baillie. Their detachments now prepared to force their way to the British army. Hyder pretended a resolution not to oppose them, and to change his position, but really formed an ambuscade round the road by which they were to pass; while a body of his cavalry by various movements, diverted the attention of the English camp. On the 10th of September, Baillie's corps advanced into the toils, and were soon surrounded by forty thousand men, besides a corps of European artillery. Notwithstanding this surprise, the English leader made a masterly disposition and gallant resistance. The Mysore troops were giving way in the greatest consternation, and victory appeared to be in the hands of the British, when a fatal accident reversed the fortune of the day; the tumbrils which contained the ammunition suddenly blew up with two dreadful explosions in the centre of the British lines; one whole face of their column was entirely laid open, and their artillery overturned and destroyed. The destruction of men was great, but the total loss of ammunition was still more dreadful to the survivors. Tippoo Saib instantly

* See Memoirs of the War in Asia, from 1780 to 1784, by Dr. William Thomson.

* See Life of Dr. W. T. in Phillips' Public Characters for 1803.

[Sir Eyre Coote sent to command in the Carnatic.]

seized the moment of advantage, and attacked the broken column with his cavalry; he was soon followed by the French corps, the first line of infantry, and entirely overpowered the sepoys in the British service, who, after displaying the most intrepid valour, were cut to pieces. Baillie himself being dangerously wounded, rallied his handful of Britons; formed a square, and his soldiers, without ammunition fighting with their bayonets, repulsed the Asiatic host, until exhausted rather than conquered they fell, and were trampled by horses and elephants. Among the killed was the brave colonel Fletcher; colonel Baillie, and about two hundred Europeans, were taken prisoners, and exposed to every insult and cruelty that the ingenuity of barbarians could inflict, while nothing could exceed their sufferings but the magnanimous and indignant fortitude with which they were borne.* This disaster threw the presidency into great consternation and terror; they considered the Carnatic on the eve of being lost, and Madras itself in the greatest danger. Hyder soon resumed the siege of Arcot, took it by assault on the third of November, and, three days after, the citadel, though capable of a much longer defence if the nabob had been resolutely faithful. The successes of Hyder caused alarm even at Calcutta: the supreme council placed little reliance on the efforts of the Madras presidency, but having resolved to assist that settlement, and wishing to be assured of the proper application of their aid, they passed a resolution, entreating sir Eyre Coote, a member of their own body and commander in chief of the forces in India, to take the command of the army in the Carnatic. The governor-general exerted himself to re-enforce the army destined to act against Hyder, and to provide money for paying and supplying the troops. It was concerted that general Coote should sail immediately for Madras, while admiral Hughes should direct his operations against the ports and shipping of Hyder on the Malabar coast. Sir Eyre Coote arrived at Madras at the close of the year 1780, where he found affairs in a more dismal situation than he had conceived: Hyder Ally had taken every measure which could occur to the most experienced general,† to distress the British, and to render himself formidable. His military conduct was supported by a degree of political address unequalled by any prince or leader that had yet appeared in Hindostan: his army was now augmented to more than a hundred thousand men, while the force of general Coote did not exceed seven thousand. On the conduct of the general, invigorating and directing this small band, depended the fate of the Carnatic, and probably of all British India.

Encouraged by his victories, Hyder had besieged the fortresses of Vellore, Wandewash, Permacoil, and Chingleput. Having called a council of war, composed of sir Hector Monro, lord Macleod, and general Stuart, the commander in chief consulted them whether it would be better to relieve these garrisons, or proceed immediately against the enemy's army. The former alternative was unanimously adopted, and in a few weeks the British general obliged Hyder to raise all the sieges, re-enforced and supplied the garrisons. The French inhabitants of Pondi-

* See narrative of the sufferings of the officers and men, Thomson's War in Asia, *passim*.

† This is the substance of Coote's first letter from Madras to the India directory.

[Operations of the British army.]

cherry, notwithstanding the generous treatment which they had received from the English, behaved with the most ungrateful perfidy; they admitted a garrison in the interests of Hyder, and collected a large store of provisions, evidently intended to support a fleet and army which were expected from the Mauritius; but Coote effectually crushed this nefarious project, by taking away their arms, destroying the boats, and removing the provisions.

These operations, though attended with success, so exhausted the army of Coote, originally small, as to render an immediate attack upon the army of Mysore extremely imprudent, unless it should prove absolutely necessary. Hyder, on the other hand, finding his soldiers discouraged by the late victories of their adversaries, did not deem it expedient to compel the British to an engagement; and during several months no conflicts of any importance took place between the armies. Hyder at length being strongly re-enforced, made preparations for the siege of Trichinopoly. Sir Eyre Coote proposed to march with the army to Porto Novo, as well that he might frustrate the design of the enemy, as to repress his depredation on the side of Tanjore and the southern provinces. The British army was small, and very indifferently provided for the field, but the situation of affairs admitted but of one alternative, either southern India must be abandoned, or an effort must be made for its preservation; and this was one of the cases which have often occurred in British history, in which the most adventurous boldness was the wisest policy.

Impelled by these considerations, the British general, with a small but valiant band, on the 16th of June set out in quest of the Mysorean myriads, and arrived at Porto Novo; thence he made an attempt on the fortress of Chillumbrum, but was obliged to retire; nevertheless, he resolved to persist in endeavouring to bring the enemy to battle, to which their commander was now much less indisposed than in the earlier part of the campaign. Hyder was so powerfully re-enforced, that confident in his strength, and elated with the repulse of the English, he resolved to hazard an engagement, rather than relinquish his design on Trichinopoly and the adjacent provinces. Determined to fight, he advanced to meet the English army, and chose a very advantageous position within a short distance of Coote. One of the great difficulties of the English army was the impossibility of obtaining intelligence respecting the force and situation of the enemy. Clouds of Hyder's cavalry hovered round our camp, and overspread the country on all sides, farther than the eye could reach; therefore it was not only impracticable to send out a reconnoitring party, but even a single scout could not escape detection. Several men were despatched for intelligence, but none returned; and the British commander could procure no farther knowledge of the number and disposition of the enemy, than the short view from his own advanced posts admitted. Thus compelled to proceed in the dark, Coote could form no previous plan of action, but was obliged to trust entirely to his invention, which must instantaneously devise plans and expedients, according to the discoveries which he should make concerning the Mysoreans. Such are perhaps the most trying circumstances in which a general can be placed; they demand not merely courage, nor even the habitual skill of professional experience framing customary plans for common situations; extrication and success were to depend on genius, which

[Battle of Porto Novo. Successive victories of the British.]

must form and adapt its combinations to a new case, with a correspondent self-possession of faculties, and promptitude of execution. These qualities the fate of the Carnatic required in the commander to whom it was intrusted, and they were found in sir Eyre Coote.

On the 1st of July, at five in the morning, the British drums beat to arms; at seven, the troops, consisting of seventeen hundred Europeans, and three thousand five hundred sepoy, marched out of the camp in two lines; the first being commanded by sir Hector Monro, and the second by general Stuart. This body of five thousand two hundred, with a proportionable quantity of artillery, advanced to meet an enemy of seventy thousand, with a powerful train, directed by European officers. On the right was the sea; and on the left, numerous bodies of the enemy's cavalry as before precluded intelligence and observation. After an hour's march, our troops entered a plain, skirted by an eminence, on which the army of Hyder was posted, being flanked on both sides by strong batteries of artillery, and vigorously and skilfully fortified in front. The English general, from this position, saw that the success of his handful depended on the first impression; the design which he thence formed was to direct his efforts against a part, and cause a confusion which might extend to the rest of the army. With this view he narrowed his front, so arranged his men as to be nearly covered from the cannon of the enemy, and assailed their left wing diagonally; this prompt and happy movement decided the fortune of the day; attacked in such an unexpected manner, the Mysoreans were thrown into disorder. Hyder dexterously and speedily changed his front, in order to encounter the English with his whole force, and attempted at once to separate the British lines, and to surround them both. His dispositions for these purposes were masterly; but the respective efforts of Monro and Stuart, with the superintending conduct of Coote, proved invincible. The Mysoreans fought valiantly, but the British continuing to pursue the advantage which their first attack had produced, after an obstinate contest of seven hours, put the enemy completely to the route, and obtained a decisive victory. The battle of Porto Novo will ever be accounted an important epoch in the history of British India: it broke the spell which the defeat of colonel Baillie had formed, destroyed the awe that was attached to the name of Hyder Ally, and by its effects, both on the relative power and authority of the belligerent parties, may be considered as the salvation of India.* "So little," says the historian of the war in Asia, "can human sagacity penetrate into the maze of future events, that the repulse at Chillumbrum, which seemed pregnant with danger, by encouraging Hyder to venture an engagement, changed the whole face of our affairs in the Carnatic."

Coote being soon re-enforced by a body of troops from Bengal, reduced Passore, a place of considerable importance, and well stored with provisions. Meanwhile Hyder, being joined by his son Tippoo with a fresh supply of troops, hazarded a second battle; but on the 27th of August, after displaying his usual skill and intrepidity, he was again defeated. Undismayed by these losses, he ventured a third engagement on the 27th of September, in which British prowess continued triumphant. He even afterwards manifested a wish for a fresh trial, but found

* See Thomson's War in Asia, p. 255—266.

[Reduction of Negapatam. Europe. French invade Jersey.]

his troops so disheartened as not to second his desire. He was now compelled to retreat into the interior country, to abandon the advantages of the former year, and to leave the English possessions in undoubted security. Such was the change effected by the ability and conduct of sir Eyre Coote in 1781.*

Meanwhile sir Edward Hughes by his naval efforts powerfully co-operated in annoying the enemies of England; he destroyed Hyder's shipping in his own ports, and thereby blasted in the bud his hopes of becoming a maritime power. Informed of the war with Holland, he immediately attacked the Dutch settlement of Negapatam, which was defended by five hundred Europeans, seven hundred Malays, four thousand five hundred sepoy, and two thousand three hundred of Hyder's troops. Admiral Hughes was in this expedition assisted by a land force under sir Hector Monro: their joint efforts reduced this place in three weeks, acquired a very considerable booty, and compelled Hyder to evacuate Tanjore. About the same time, the British factory in the island of Sumatra, with the assistance of captain Clements and a small squadron of ships, subdued all the Dutch settlements on the west coasts of the island.

In Europe, the Bourbon princes, re-enforced by the Dutch, formed a comprehensive plan of operations; they proposed to subdue Jersey, to attack our naval armaments on our own coast, to invade Minorca, and accomplish the reduction of Gibraltar. In January, the baron de Rullecourt invaded the island of Jersey, and leaving a small garrison a Grouville, marched to St. Helier. Having besieged the avenues of the town, he surprised the guard in the dark, and possessed the market place without noise; and at the break of day, the inhabitants were astonished to find themselves in the hands of the enemy. Major Corbet, deputy-governor, with the magistrates and principal inhabitants, being brought prisoners to the court-house, the French commander wrote terms of capitulation, by which the island was to be surrendered to France, the troops to lay down their arms, and to be conveyed to England. The lieutenant-governor represented, that no act could have the smallest validity in his present situation, and that the officers and troops were too well informed of their duty to pay any regard to his acts while a prisoner; but his remonstrance was unavailing, Rullecourt was peremptory in his demand, and Corbet, under the impression of the moment, too precipitately signed the capitulation.† The French commander summoned Elizabeth castle to surrender on the prescribed terms; but this fortress was preserved by the conduct and fortitude of captains Aylward and Mulcaster, who having retired thither at the first alarm, prepared against a sudden attack, rejected the summons with great spirit, and peremptorily refused to pay the smallest regard to the capitulation, or to any orders which should be issued by the lieutenant-governor in his present circumstances. Meanwhile the alarm extended, and the nearest troops rushed with the utmost expedition towards the point of danger, and immediately formed on an eminence near the town, under the conduct of major Pier-son of the ninety-fifth regiment. Rullecourt required the British commander immediately to yield; the gallant officer replied, that if the French leader and troops did not within twenty minutes lay down their

* Annual Register, 1781.

† Ibid.

[Blockade of Gibraltar.]

arms and surrender themselves prisoners of war, he should attack them the instant that period was expired. Pierson made a very masterly disposition of his forces, and when the specified time was elapsed, began the conflict with such a union of impetuosity and skill as soon gained a decisive victory. The French general being mortally wounded, the next in command seeing the hopelessness of their situation, requested the lieutenant-governor to resume his authority, and to accept of their surrender as prisoners of war. The satisfaction arising from this victory was greatly diminished by the fall of the hero to whom it was owing; fighting at the head of conquering troops, the gallant Pierson was killed in the twenty-fifth year of his age. The redoubt at Grouville was immediately attacked and retaken, and the whole of the French invading party was either killed or taken prisoners: thus ended the second attempt of France on the island of Jersey.

The blockade of Gibraltar continued, and notwithstanding the supply of provisions which had been brought by admiral Rodney in the preceding year, the garrison began to feel the distresses of restricted food: so early as October 1780, the governor had been obliged to deduct a quarter of a pound from each man's daily allowance of bread, and to confine the consumption of meat to a pound and a half a week, which, from being so long kept, was now scarcely eatable. The inhabitants were reduced to still greater difficulties; after the supply which the English fleet had brought, and even earlier, not a single vessel arrived with provisions or necessaries, either from the neighbouring shores of Barbary, or any of the more distant coasts of Africa; so that, with every other misfortune, they were at once cut off from that great and long established source of a cheap and plentiful market, and reduced to depend entirely for relief on the casual arrival of a few small Minorcan vessels, whose cargoes were insufficient, and prices immoderate.* To this distressing situation both the soldiers and inhabitants submitted, not only without murmur, but with universal cheerfulness. In such circumstances, the interest and honour of Britain required, that one of the first measures of the campaign should be the relief of Gibraltar; and early in spring, a great fleet under the conduct of the admirals Darby, Digby, and sir J. Lockhart Ross, was fitted out for this service. The French and Spaniards boasted that they would defeat the execution of this de-

* The following account, copied from the Annual Register of 1783, and with the usual accuracy of that valuable performance, clearly illustrates the distressed state of the garrison:—"Of the most common and indispensable necessities of life: bad ship biscuit, full of worms, was sold at a shilling a pound; flour and beef, in not much better condition, at the same price; old dried pease at a third more; the worst salt, half dirt, the sweepings of ship's bottoms and store-houses, at eight-pence; old Irish salt butter at half a crown; the worst sort of brown sugar brought the same price; and English farthing candles were sold at six-pence a piece.

"But fresh provisions bore still more exorbitant prices, even when the arrival of vessels from the Mediterranean opened a market: turkeys sold at three pounds twelve shillings a piece; sucking pigs at two guineas; ducks at half a guinea; and small hens sold at nine shillings a piece. A guinea was refused for a calf's pluck; and one pound seven shillings asked for an ox's head. To heighten every distress, the firing was so nearly exhausted as scarcely to afford a sufficiency for the most indispensable culinary purposes; so that all the linen of the town and garrison was washed in cold water and worn without ironing. This want was severely felt in the wet season, which, notwithstanding the general warmth of the climate, is exceedingly cold at Gibraltar."

[Bombardment of Gibraltar.]

sign; thereby conceiving a vain hope of deterring Britain from the attempt. The English fleet consisted of twenty-eight sail of the line. A French armament of twenty-six ships was ready at Brest, while thirty Spanish ships were parading in the bay of Cadiz. France was much more intent on her own designs of overpowering the British in America and the West Indies, and co-operating with the native powers of the East, than on seconding the project of Spain against Gibraltar; instead of seeking a junction with the fleet of her allies, she sent her principal naval force, under count de Grasse, to the western world, and a strong squadron under Suffrein to the eastern. The British fleet left St. Helen's on the 13th of March, and were obliged to delay some days on the coast of Ireland, waiting for victuallers from Cork. It had also under its convoy the East and West India fleets: having conducted these merchantmen beyond the reach of the enemy's fleets, admiral Darby steered for Gibraltar with his naval force, and ninety-seven victuallers. On the 12th of April he arrived off Cadiz, where he saw the Spanish fleet lying at anchor, and evidently disposed to afford him no opposition. The British admiral having sent forward the convoy under cover of a few men of war and frigates, cruised with his fleet off the straits, in hopes of enticing the enemy to hazard an engagement; but the Spanish armament remained in its former station. A vexatious, though not formidable enemy greatly annoyed the British fleet: during the siege, several gun-boats, constructed at Algeziras on the western side of Gibraltar bay, by night crossed and fired on the town and garrison. When the convoy was in the bay, about twenty of these boats sailed, under the benefit of a calm, every morning from Algeziras, and with a fixed and steady aim regularly cannonaded and bombarded our ships; but as soon as the wind at its stated hour began to spring up, they immediately fled, and were pursued in vain. These efforts were merely troublesome, without effecting any material damage to the shipping, and the garrison was completely supplied. Enraged at this disappointment of her expectations to reduce Gibraltar by blockade, Spain redoubled her exertions for compassing her object by force. She raised the most stupendous works, and placed on them the most formidable artillery that had ever been employed in a siege: a hundred and seventy pieces of cannon, and eighty mortars, poured their fire upon Elliot's brave garrison. This dreadful cannonade and bombardment was continued night and day for many months without intermission. Nothing, it was said, and may well be conceived, could be more terribly sublime than the view and report of this scene to those who observed them from the neighbouring hills of Barbary and Spain, during the night, especially in the beginning, when the cannonade of the enemy being returned with still superior power by general Elliot, the whole rock seemed to vomit out fire, and all distinction of parts were lost in flame and smoke. While the fleet continued in the bay, general Elliot retorted the enemy's attack with a prodigious shower of fire; but as it was a standing maxim with that experienced and wise commander, never to waste his ammunition, and as the great and evidently increasing difficulty of supply rendered this caution still more essentially necessary, he soon retrenched in that respect, and seemed to behold unconcerned the fury and violence of the enemy. It was calculated, that during three weeks the Spaniards expended fifty tons of powder each day: after

[Sortie of the British and destruction of the Spanish batteries.]

that time, however, they relaxed their efforts, and were more sparing in the consumption of ammunition. The impression made on the garrison by these exertions was very disproportionate to the labour and expense of the enemy. The whole loss, from the 12th of April to the end of June, amounted to only one commissioned officer and fifty-two private men killed, and to seven officers and two hundred and fifty-three privates wounded. The damage of the works was too trifling to give any concern to the defenders, but the duty and fatigue were extremely great. The town suffered dreadful damage: the inhabitants consisted of various nations and religions; the English amounted only to five hundred, the Roman catholics to near two thousand, and the Jews were little short of nine hundred. Those who escaped destruction from the cannonade and bombardment, embraced every opportunity of leaving so dangerous a situation, and removed either to England or to the neighbouring countries. However the Spaniards found they might destroy the lives and effects of individuals, they could not advance their object by all their operose labour, and therefore towards the close of the summer suspended their efforts.

General Elliot, meanwhile, appeared to employ himself in strengthening his defences, while he was really meditating a terrible blow on the camp of the enemy. Having seen that the preparations of the Spaniards were arrived at the highest possible perfection, he conceived a project of frustrating all their mighty efforts, by attacking, storming, and destroying their works. He employed the greatest part of autumn in making the most complete arrangements for executing the whole and every part of this grand design. His object was to attack the fortifications on every side at the same instant: to effect this purpose, he distributed his various forces where the several parts could respectively be most efficient, and in such relative positions as rendered co-operation most easy, expeditious, and impressive. To fertility of invention, the genius of Elliot united a comprehensiveness of mind, which grasped objects in all their bearings and relations, cool and vigorous judgment, and nice discrimination; with the greatest exactness he adjusted his plan in all departments, and made provisions for every probable contingency. The time he fixed for his enterprise was a night during the darkness of winter. On the 27th of November, at three in the morning, the British force marched in the following order: the troops were divided into three columns; the centre was commanded by the Hanoverian lieutenant-colonel Dachenhausen, the column on the right by lieutenant-colonel Hugo of the same corps, and the body on the left by lieutenant-colonel Trig of the 12th regiment; the reserve was led by major Maxwell of the 73d; a party of seamen, in two divisions, was conducted by the lieutenants Campbell and Muckle of the Brilliant and Porcupine royal frigates; and the whole body was headed by brigadier-general Ross. In each column there was an advanced corps, a body of pioneers, a party of artillery-men carrying combustibles, a sustaining corps, and a reserve in the rear. With such silence did they march, that the enemy had not the smallest suspicion of their approach, until an universal attack conveyed the tremendous intimation. The ardour of our troops was every where irresistible: the Spaniards, astonished, confounded, and dismayed, fled with the utmost precipitation, and abandoned those immense works of so much labour, time, and expense. The whole efforts

[The combined fleet sails to the channel.]

of Spanish power and skill for two years, the chief object of their pride and exultation, were in two hours destroyed by British genius directing British intrepidity, ardour, and skill. The most wonderful exertions were made by the pioneers and artillery-men, who spread their fire with such astonishing rapidity, that in half an hour two mortar batteries of ten thirteen inch mortars, the batteries of heavy cannon, with all the lines of approach, communication, and traverse, were in flames, and every thing subject to the action of fire was finally reduced to ashes. The mortars and cannon were spiked, and their beds, carriages, and platforms destroyed. The magazines blew up one after another in the course of the conflagration. Before day-break the British force, having completely executed their grand project, returned to the garrison.

Admiral Darby having in vain endeavoured to draw the Spanish fleet to an engagement, after relieving Gibraltar, returned to protect the channel. Meanwhile monsieur de Guichen, understanding that the British fleet no longer intervened between Brest and Cadiz, sailed with eighteen ships of the line to join the Spanish fleet, and to support it in the invasion of Minorca; which, next to Gibraltar, was the principal European object of Spanish ambition. They set sail for Cadiz in the end of July, having ten thousand land forces on board; proceeding with these to the Mediterranean, they left them at Minorca, and, returning to the Atlantic, directed their course to the English channel, with forty-nine ships of the line. Their reasons for taking this direction were various: they proposed to prevent succours from being sent to Minorca, and to intercept our homeward-bound fleets, which were expected at this time to return, and a large outward-bound convoy on the eve of sailing from Cork. So little had we foreseen or suspected their design, that the combined fleets had formed a line from Ushant to the Scilly islands, to bar the entrance into the channel, before it was known in England that they were arrived in the ocean. Admiral Darby, then in the channel, had almost fallen in with the enemy, with only twenty ships of the line, when the accidental meeting of a neutral vessel informed him of their situation and force. The British admiral returned to Torbay to wait for re-enforcements, and instructions from the admiralty. His fleet was soon joined by so many ships as to amount to thirty sail of the line: he now received orders to put to sea for the protection of the homeward-bound merchantmen; but, as the enemy was so much superior, to avoid a close and decisive engagement, unless absolutely necessary for the preservation of the convoy. Meanwhile the French admiral proposed to attack the British fleet in its station at Torbay, but was overruled by his Spanish colleague. That commander represented the state both of the ships and men, of whom, especially the Spaniards, great numbers were sick, as depriving them really of that superiority which they possessed in appearance. They therefore directed their attention entirely to the interception of British merchandise. But very stormy weather obliged them to return, in the beginning of September, to Brest, where the French going into port, the Spaniards proceeded to their own coasts. Darby, after conducting the expected merchantmen into harbour, returned himself to Plymouth in November.

The French refitted their fleet with the utmost expedition. Not-

[Admiral Kempenfeldt intercepts a French convoy. War with Holland.]

withstanding the lateness of the season, they proposed to re-enforce count de Grasse with both troops and ships of war in the west, and to support him with stores; to re-enforce and supply Suffrein in the east: and to rejoin the Spanish fleet, that they might prevent England from relieving Minorca. The several squadrons and convoys were ordered to sail together as far as their course lay in the same direction. The British admiralty heard of this preparation and its objects, but without being accurately informed of its force, which amounted to nineteen ships of the line. They despatched admiral Kempenfeldt with twelve ships of the line, one fifty gun ship, and four frigates, to intercept the French squadron and convoy. The British admiral descried the enemy on the 12th of December, when the fleet and convoy were dispersed by a hard gale of wind, and the latter considerably behind. He endeavoured to avail himself of this situation, by first cutting off the convoy, and afterwards fighting the fleet. For the intended service, admiral Kempenfeldt's number of frigates was much too small; notwithstanding this deficiency, however, twenty transports and storeships were captured, containing eleven hundred land forces, seven hundred seamen, a great quantity of ordnance, arms, warlike stores, camp equipage, clothing, and provisions; many ships were also dispersed. The French admiral, meanwhile, endeavoured to collect his fleet, and form a line, but night came on before he could accomplish his purpose. Kempenfeldt, still ignorant of the force of the enemy, made preparations for fighting the next morning. At day-light, perceiving them to leeward, he formed his line; but, on a nearer approach, discovering their strength, he thought it prudent to decline an engagement. The enemy did not appear so confident in their superior numbers as to urge the British to battle: both fleets therefore parted, as if by mutual consent. Valuable as was the capture achieved by Kempenfeldt, yet great dissatisfaction was excited in England against the admiralty, for not furnishing that gallant commander with a force which might have seized the convoy, and vanquished the French fleet: there were ships, they said, lying idle in harbour, which ought to have been employed in this service.

The war with Holland required in Europe a considerable diversion of our naval force. The Dutch were fortunately very little prepared for hostilities, and extremely deficient in seamen and naval stores, in which they had heretofore so greatly abounded. The objects arising from war with them were, by cutting off their sources of naval supply from the north, to prevent the restoration of their marine, to destroy their immense commerce from those quarters, to protect our own, and to prevent their intercourse with our enemies in southern Europe. For these purposes a fleet was stationed in the North Seas, under admiral Hyde Parker. In the beginning of June, the Dutch endeavoured to prepare such a fleet as should protect their own Baltic trade, and intercept ours. On the 19th of July, admiral Zoutman sailed from the Texel, with eight ships of the line, ten very large frigates, and five sloops. Admiral Parker was now on his return from Elsinour, with a convoy under his protection; his squadron consisted of six ships of the line, of which two were in very bad condition, and several frigates.

Early on the fifth of August, the fleets came in sight of each other

[Action off the Dogger Bank. Expedition to the cape of Good Hope.]

off the Dogger Bank; Parker perceiving the strength of the enemy, ordered his convoy to make the best of their way, and sent his frigates for their protection: the Dutch admiral having used the same precaution, prepared for battle, and both parties appeared eager for a close engagement. They advanced to meet each other in gloomy silence, without firing a gun until they were within pistol shot. The Dutch were superior both in number of ships and weight of metal; but the British admiral, notwithstanding this inferiority, made the battle a trial of force, rather than of skill. Indeed, both parties were so extremely eager to display national valour, as to supersede all dexterity of manœuvre. For three hours and forty minutes did they fight without intermission, ranged abreast of each other; the conflict was extremely bloody; of the English five hundred were killed or wounded, but the Dutch lost upwards of eleven hundred men. Though the enemy long kept the sea with astonishing firmness and intrepidity, yet the English were evidently superior; one of the best ships of the Dutch was sunk, and two more so much damaged as to be for ever unfit for service. Though the British ships were greatly shattered, yet none of them were hurt beyond the possibility of reparation. The Dutch convoy was scattered, and compelled to return home instead of pursuing its course. The voyage to the Baltic was of necessity abandoned, all means of procuring naval stores were cut off, and the immense carrying trade between the northern and southern nations of Europe, which, along with their fisheries, had been the great source of the Dutch power and wealth, was for this year annihilated. Though the result of the engagement, on the whole, proved favourable to England, and the valour displayed in the action was highly and generally approved, yet the admiralty was severely blamed for not furnishing admiral Parker with a sufficient force. There were as many ships idle, either at Chatham or in the Downs, as, if they had joined Parker, would have enabled him to bring the Dutch fleet and convoy into England. The admiral himself, appears to have been by no means satisfied with the support which he had received; he resigned his command, and on that occasion did not conceal his sentiments.*

Commodore Johnstone was appointed to command a squadron destined to annoy the Dutch in another quarter, by attacking the cape of Good Hope, a settlement extremely valuable to the United Provinces; thence he was to proceed to the Spanish settlement of Buenos Ayres, in the Rio de la Plata of South America, where a dangerous insurrection had given great alarm to the court of Madrid. The Dutch, conscious of their inability to defend the cape, applied for assistance to France. The court of Versailles being also deeply interested in preventing Britain from obtaining so important a possession, ordered monsieur de Suffrein, in his way to India, to watch the motions of the British squadron. Commodore Johnstone's naval force consisted of a seventy-four, a sixty-four, and three fifty gun ships, besides several frigates, a bomb-vessel, a fire-ship, and some sloops of war. The land force was composed of three new regiments, of a thousand men each: several outward bound East Indianmen and store ordnance vessels went out with this convoy; and the whole fleet, including transports and armed ships, amounted to more than forty sail.

* See Annual Register, 1781.

[West Indies. Tremendous hurricane in the Leeward Islands.]

With these commodore Johnstone stopped at Cape de Verd Islands, for water and fresh provisions : for collecting these supplies, a great part of the crews, apprehending no enemy to be near, were dispersed on shore. The French squadron, which consisted of five ships of the line, with a body of land forces, being informed of the situation of the British, expected to take them by surprise. On the 16th of April, Suffrein leaving his convoy at a distance, attacked the British squadron in Port Praya, in the island of St. Jago. He advanced as if to certain victory, but was soon taught his mistake : the British force, though surprised, was so far from being intimidated, that they not only rallied, but entirely beat off the enemy, with great loss of men, and damage to the shipping. Suffrein, disappointed in this attempt, made the best of his way to the cape, where, by his junction with the Dutch garrison, he knew he should be able to defend it against Johnstone's armament. The British commodore, finding on his arrival, that success would be impracticable, forbore the attempt. Soon after, meeting with five richly laden homeward-bound Dutch East India-men, he took four, and burnt the other : when, perceiving that he could not compass the original purpose of his expedition, he returned to England with his prizes.

The West Indies, after being the theatre of the hostilities which have been recently narrated, experienced a most terrible enemy in the warring elements. This was a hurricane, far exceeding in tremendous horror and dreadful destruction, the usual convulsions of the torrid zone.

On the 10th of October, 1780, this engine of devastation commenced its fell movements in the island of Barbadoes. Thunder and lightning, whirlwinds, earthquakes, torrents of rain, fire, air, earth, and water, appeared to vie with each other in rapidity of desolation. The first night, Bridgetown, the capital of the island, was levelled with the ground. Other towns, as well as villages and single houses, shared the same fate : plantations were destroyed, the produce of the earth was torn up, animals perished, and numbers of human beings fell either victims to the fury of the elements, or to the downfall of buildings.* The fear of a pestilence, from the multitude of dead bodies in so putrifying a climate, compelled the survivors instantaneously to bury the dead, without allowing to relations and friends the melancholy pleasure of a distinguishing attention to the objects of their affection. The negroes by rapine and violence added to the general calamity, and as they were much more numerous than the whites, might have utterly ruined the island, had not general Vaughan, with a considerable body of troops, been stationed upon it, and awed those barbarians to quietness and obedience. The prisons being involved in the common destruction, the late tenants of those mansions, who had been confined for violating the laws, joined in the outrages ; but the prisoners of war, especially a party of Spaniards, acted with the greatest humanity and honour, in assisting the distressed inhabitants, and preserving public order. The islands of St. Lucia, Grenada, St. Vincent's and Dominica, were also desolated. The French islands in the same quarter of the West Indies, especially Martinique

* Annual Register, 1781.

[Capture of St. Eustatius.]

and Guadaloupe, suffered no less than the English.* But a still more direful hurricane, on the 3d of October, wreaked its vengeance on Jamaica, and especially on the districts of Westmoreland and Hanover, two of the most fertile spots in the island. The inhabitants of Savannah la Mar, a considerable trading town in that quarter, were beholding with astonishment such a swell of the sea as had never before been seen, when, on a sudden, the waters of the deep bursting through all bounds, overwhelmed the town; and swept man, beast, and habitation in one torrent of destruction. What the waters did not reach in the higher vicinity, combined tempest and earthquake finished. Besides present desolation, this dreadful scourge, by covering the most fertile tracts with sand and other barren substances, sterilized the ground, and rendered it unsusceptible of future culture. The loss of property was estimated at upwards of a million sterling in two parishes in Jamaica. Their neighbours endeavoured to alleviate the miseries of the sufferers; but their principal and most effectual relief they derived from the mother country, in the generous benefactions of individuals, and the liberal munificence of the legislature.

Admiral Rodney was fortunately at New-York at this terrible season, and returned at the close of the year to the West Indies. Having concerted his plan of operation with general Vaughan, he, together with that commander, undertook an expedition for the recovery of St. Vincent's, in the expectation of finding its fortifications dismantled, and its garrison impaired by the recent hurricane. Having however reconnoitred, and finding both the works and garrison in such force as to require more time for reduction than its comparative value justified, he therefore desisted from the attempt. No sooner had Britain been compelled to go to war with Holland, than ministers, with a meritorious policy, projected to strike a blow, which should prove fatal to the commercial resources of her ungrateful enemy. The Dutch island of St. Eustatius, though itself a barren rock, had long been the seat of an immense and lucrative commerce: it was a general market and magazine to all nations; its largest gains were, during the seasons of war, among its neighbours, as it then derived from its neutrality unbounded freedom of trade. The property on a settlement so circumstanced was known to be extremely great; to the acquisition of such valuable spoils, therefore, government directed its views, and sent instructions to the commanders to make an attempt on the opulent repository. As the place was naturally strong, with the assistance of the French, it might have been rendered able to withstand an attack. Our commanders, to anticipate re-enforcements, and at the same time deceive the enemy, first pretended a design of assailing Martinico; but suddenly appearing before the island of St. Eustatius, they surrounded it with a great force. The admiral and general summoned the governor to surrender, with which demand that

* It is remarkable, that in the same month some parts of the country in the vicinity of London experienced a tornado very unusual in this northern climate. The storm burst on Hammersmith, Roehampton, Richmond, Kingston, and the environs. At Hammersmith it blew down a considerable part of the church, though very strongly built, and both there and at other places damaged a number of houses. The same day a much more violent tempest raged on the coast of Normandy. See Chronicle in the Annual Register, 1780, and Gentleman's Magazine for October in the same year.

[De Grasse arrives in the West Indies. Naval engagements.]

officer very prudently complied, and recommended the town and inhabitants to the known clemency of the British conquerors. The wealth found in this place was estimated, on a moderate calculation, at three millions sterling. Soon after, a convoy of Dutch merchantmen, richly laden, were captured by three of Rodney's ships, and the prizes estimated at about six hundred thousand pounds sterling. About this time, some enterprising adventurers from Bristol, with a squadron of privateers, sailed to Surinam, and under the guns of the Dutch forts, brought away every valuable ship from the settlements of Demarara and Issequibo. Thus Holland, in the destruction of her commerce, was taught the folly of provoking to hostilities the most powerful maritime state of the universe.*

The court of Versailles formed the same project this campaign, which had been defeated in the preceding, to overpower the English force in the West Indies, and afterwards to compel Britain to relinquish North America. There were already eight ships of the line at St. Domingo and Martinico, with a considerable body of land forces. On the 22d of March, count de Grasse, with twenty sail of the line, one of fifty-four guns, and six thousand land forces, sailed for the West Indies, with an immense convoy, amounting to two hundred and fifty ships, and arrived off Martinico. In the end of April, sir George Rodney having detached three of his ships to escort the St. Eustatius booty to Britain under commodore Hotham, had only twenty-one ships of the line, while De Grasse, being re-enforced from Martinico, had twenty-four. Rodney himself remaining with general Vaughan at St. Eustatius, sent sir Samuel Hood towards Martinico, in order to intercept de Grasse's fleet and convoy. On the 28th of April, admiral Hood was informed by his advanced cruisers, that the enemy was approaching in the channel between St. Lucia and Martinico. The next morning he descried the fleet before the convoy; and though he had only eighteen ships of the line to twenty-four, and the enemy had the wind in their favour, the British commander determined to hazard an engagement. With great skill and dexterity he endeavoured to gain the wind, and come to close battle. De Grasse, however, would not venture a decisive action, and from his windward position being enabled to preserve the distance which he chose, began to cannonade so far from the British ships as to admit of little execution on either side. During the first conflict, the British van, however, and the foremost ships of the centre, after repeated endeavours, at last succeeded in approaching nearer to the enemy, and having received a very heavy fire, were considerably damaged in their masts, hulls, and rigging, before the rest of our ships came up to their assistance. Finding his wounded ships in a very shattered condition, admiral Hood thought it prudent during the night to sail for Antigua. The marquis de Bouillé attempted, in the absence of our fleet, to reduce St. Lucia on the 10th of May; but by the vigorous resistance of the garrison, he was compelled to relinquish the

* British merchants being proprietors of some parts of the property captured in the Dutch settlements, considerable disputes arose between them and the admiral on this subject. It is remarkable, that in one of the letters written on this occasion, Rodney prophesied that Demarara would in a few years very far surpass in value the expectations which were then entertained. This prediction, though then thought improbable, has been since amply verified.

[Expedition of the French against Tobago.]

design. Admiral Rodney now found it necessary, instead of spending more time at St. Eustatius, to employ his whole force against the French armament; he therefore immediately sailed to Antigua, and, as soon as the ships were repaired, proceeded towards Barbadoes.

On the very day that sir George Rodney, with the fleets from Antigua, arrived at Barbadoes, a small French squadron, with a considerable body of land forces, under the conduct of M. de Blanchelande, late governor of St. Vincent's, appeared off the island of Tobago. On the 23d of May, the day on which the enemy appeared, Mr. George Fergusson, the governor, sent the intelligence to Rodney, which the admiral received on the 26th. The naval commander imagined the force of the enemy much less considerable than it was, and on that supposition destined six sail of the line and some frigates, under admiral Drake, with about six hundred land forces, for its relief. That officer having arrived on the 30th off Tobago, descried between him and the land the enemy's fleet, consisting of twenty-four sail of the line. Finding it impossible to attempt a landing, he retired, and sent the commander-in-chief intelligence of the posture of affairs. Meanwhile, about three thousand French troops landed on the island. The defenders, including a few soldiers and the colonial militia, amounted only to four hundred and twenty-seven whites; but they found most faithful and intrepid auxiliaries in their blacks. Governor Fergusson* himself was distinguished for his treatment of negroes, the joint result of judgment and humanity, by which he secured the obedience, while he conciliated the affection, and established the fidelity of his labourers. His precept and example influencing other planters, rendered the condition of the blacks much more comfortable than in most of the other settlements, and attached to their masters, hearts very susceptible of kind impressions. The island, however, not being far advanced in cultivation, the number of negroes fit to bear arms was but small. The gallant Fergusson made a skilful and vigorous defence against an enemy four times the number of his brave band. Trusting that his message would bring effectual succour, he occupied a strong post, and for seven days prevented the enemy from making progress. The marquis de Bouillé, commander of the invaders, found all attempts to dislodge his opponents vain; wherefore, to reduce them to submission, he began to destroy their plantations. The islanders, seeing the approaching devastation of their property, were awed to concessions, which the fear of personal danger could not extort, and at last agreed to capitulate. The firmness of the governor restraining them from precipitate offers, procured honourable and advantageous terms. Admiral Rodney did not escape censure for not having adopted more effectual measures for the relief of Tobago; and it was asserted with some reason, that the French, without a great superiority of naval force, had in this campaign acquired a most important advantage in the West Indies. From the capture of Tobago in the beginning of June, to the beginning of August, de Grasse continued in the West Indies, without being encountered by Rodney; and in July sailed to St. Domingo, where, after being re-enforced by five ships of the line, he escorted

* Brother to the colonel, who lived and died so honourably.—See this history, chap. xxv.

[The Spaniards reduce West Florida. Last efforts for the recovery of America.]

the rich mercantile convoy, with a fleet amounting to twenty-eight ships of the line. He conducted the convoy northwards until they were out of danger, and proceeded himself to the second object of his expedition. Rodney, conceiving that his health required an immediate return to his native country, escorted the West India convoy home, and sent the greater part of his fleet, under sir Samuel Hood, to watch the motions of de Grasse.

While these operations were carrying on between the French and British among the eastern settlements of the West Indies, the Spaniards were not inactive in the western. Elated with their successful attack against the British settlements on the Mississippi, they had extended their views to West Florida. In the year 1780, they had captured the fort of Bobille, on the confines of Florida; and in 1781, preparing a considerable armament from the Havannah, they resolved to besiege Pensacola. The enemy, on their first departure, were dispersed by a hurricane, but soon refitting, again set sail with eight thousand land forces, and fifteen ships of the line. On the 9th of March they arrived at Pensacola. Mr. Chester, governor of the province, and general Campbell, governor of the town, with a garrison not exceeding three thousand men, including inhabitants, made the most skilful dispositions for the defence of the place. The enemy were near two months employed against Pensacola, before they were prepared for a general assault; and though they must ultimately, from the vast superiority of their numbers, have prevailed, yet the courage and activity of the garrison would have withstood their efforts much longer, had not their principal redoubt been accidentally blown up by the falling of a bomb at the door of the magazine, which set fire to the powder. The garrison now finding that farther defence was hopeless, next morning agreed to capitulate, being the 9th of May, exactly two months after the siege commenced; and thus the province of West Florida became a possession of Spain.

The history now comes to the last exertions of Britain for the recovery of North America—efforts glorious to the valour of her champions, but terminating in events melancholy to the national interests. Ministry had uniformly been remarkable, during the American war, for misapprehending situations and events, over-rating partial advantages, and conceiving them to be general and decisive. The reduction of Charleston, and compulsory submission of South Carolina, they considered as certain indications of her future success, and of the desire of the colonists to return to their connexion with the parent country. They received the exaggerations of deserters from America as authentic testimony, and gave to the effusions of disappointed pride and resentment, a belief due only to the impartial narratives of truth. The defection of Arnold elevated their hopes of recovering the colonies; they considered his manifesto describing both the weakness and discontent of the American army, as unquestionable evidence.* Proceeding on such superficial views,

* The following extract from a letter written by a respectable field officer of the guards, dated New-York, August the 24th, 1781, illustrates the opinion which was entertained by impartial observers on the spot, concerning the information and conduct of ministry, and with prophetic sagacity predicts the event:—

“Well, here I am once more, wrapt up in military nonsense; for what but nonsense must be the science of *destroying mankind*, when tailors and shoemakers

[Object and plan of the campaign of 1781.]

and feeble reasoning, they formed their expectations and plans. It was apprehended that general Clinton, from the supposed weakness and

start up generals, and dare to oppose us regularly bred practitioners : however, "*ex nihilo nihil fit*," and these self-created heroes have the less merit, as we have learnt to bear and forbear, and even turn the left cheek where the right has been smitten.

"Now, my good friend, I lament that it is not in my power to send you much consolation from here. The strange and unaccountable infatuation that attends our sagacious ministers at home, (who seem to embrace every phantom, merely that they may be deceived,) will indubitably assist others on this side of the Atlantic in bringing this rebellion to a most dishonourable conclusion. To enter into a particular detail of all our follies, &c. &c. would take up a volume; but I should wish to give you some idea of our present situation at New-York.—When I left England it was confidently asserted by those who ought to have known better, 'that the rebel army was scarce existing; that the people in general were in a state of the utmost misery and despondency, their finances totally exhausted, without credit, without trade, or the means of procuring the common necessities of life; and, at the same time, general inclination to submit to the mercy of Great Britain.' This was the language of the 1st of last April: I own that was a day on which it is usual for the unwary passenger to be held up to ridicule by much greater fools than himself.

"With respect to the rebels: at no period of time since the commencement of this infamous rebellion, have the Americans fitted out so many large ships as within these eight months: their success (thanks to our navy) has answered their most sanguine expectations. Their trade from Philadelphia to the Havannah and the West Indies has been very great, although it is in the power of two frigates to secure the entrance into the river Delaware. The success of the Spaniards at Pensacola was entirely owing to the constant supplies of flour they received from the rebels, without which they could not have subsisted their army. With respect to the misery of the people, I leave you to judge how great it must be, when beef and mutton sell at the rate of two-pence a pound in the Jerseys, while we in New-York pay two shillings: other things in proportion. The depreciation of their paper money is now so far from being a loss to them, that it is a very great advantage, as, by the constant circulation of many hundred thousand *hard* dollars, which they have at length received, their paper currency will be annihilated, so that they are now beginning on a new bank. As to the despondency of the people, believe it not; for the spirit of rebellion never breathed with more rancour than it does at this moment in America. Perhaps the great successes of our forces to the southward have convinced you by this time, that the Carolinians and Virginians are still unconquered.

"The French and rebel army, united under Washington, consists of near twelve thousand men, exclusive of militia, who are now called upon to join with the greatest force they can collect, in the most sacred promise of plunder of this city. The French fleet from the West Indies is expected in a very short time with a re-enforcement, and then we are to expect to be attacked here. As to the British army in these lines, small as it is, it is equal, beyond a doubt, to the annihilation of the *monsieurs* and rebels under the great general Washington, if they would risk a battle, which we have no reason to suppose they would not do, as they continue to insult us so unpunished. The conduct of this war has been, and continues to be, most shameful and unpardonable; and neither justice nor common sense is permitted to have the smallest weight in the counsels of our great men.—Public faith, once deemed inviolable, is daily sacrificed, and not the smallest attention is paid to any thing but plunder. The expenditure of public money is notoriously committed to the most mean and dishonest of men. There is not a paltry clerk in one of our departments, who cannot in the space of a twelvemonth afford to keep his town and country house, carriage, &c. &c. and realize thousands. Facts must speak for themselves, and I hope they will be required. It is impossible, in short, to suppose affairs can go as they should do, when merit is *discouraged*, *infamy rewarded*, and the name of an *honest* man a sufficient bar to his advancement. I am heartily sick of it all; I wish to return in peace and quietness to Old England.

"I say nothing of myself, but that I am, thank God, in good health, determined to *do my duty* in all situations, to the best of my abilities; and let what happen, never to *sign a convention with rebels*.

[Expedition of lord Cornwallis. Defeat of Tarleton.]

disaffection of Washington's army, would not only be able to afford that body full employment in the vicinity of New-York, but also to co-operate powerfully with the southern force, overpower the Americans who were still refractory, and enable the well affected (according to the ministerial hypothesis so often disproved by fact, the majority) to declare their sentiments, and assert their loyalty. On this theory the plan of the campaign was constructed: its principal and prominent object was, that lord Cornwallis should pervade the interjacent provinces, join Arnold, and in Virginia attack the marquis de la Fayette, an active partisan of the republicans; while sir Henry Clinton should in the north oppose general Washington, and count Rochambeau, commander of the French troops. Early in the year 1781, lord Cornwallis taking the field, advanced to the frontiers of Carolina. Tarleton having been ordered to scour the country to the left, pursued Morgan the American partisan; that officer retired to the Broad River, intending to cross it with his troops; but he found that from a sudden thaw the waters were so high as to render it impassable, unless with great danger: being so situated and closely pressed by Tarleton, he resolved to hazard a battle. On the 18th of January, at eight in the morning, Tarleton came in sight of the enemy; they were drawn up on the edge of an open wood without defences, and though their numbers might have been somewhat superior to his own, the quality of his troops was so different as not to admit a doubt of success, which was still farther confirmed by his great strength of cavalry, so that every thing seemed to indicate a complete victory. His first line consisted of the seventh regiment, the foot and light infantry of his legion; the second of the first battalion of the seventy-first, while troops of cavalry flanked each line. Morgan placed seven hundred militia in one line on the edge of the wood; the second consisted of regular troops, on which he had much dependence: these he disposed out of sight in the wood. The British troops soon broke the enemy's line, and concluding the victory to be gained, were pursuing the fugitives, when, on a sudden, the second line of the enemy, which opened to the right and left to entice the pursuers, poured in a close and deadly fire on both sides. The ground was in an instant covered with the killed and wounded; and those brave troops, who had been so long inured to conquest, by this severe and unexpected check, were thrown into irremediable disorder, and a total defeat was the immediate consequence; the loss in killed, wounded, and prisoners, exceeded four hundred men. Tarleton used every effort that ingenuity could devise to rally his men, and repulse the American horse, but his abilities and courage could not recover the fallen fortune of the day. The loss of Tarleton's corps, so soon after the disaster at King's Mountain, was severely felt by lord Cornwallis, to whom, on such a service, and in such a country, light troops were of the highest importance. The American general, Greene, who had been appointed to watch the motions of lord Cornwallis, was stationed with a considerable force in North Carolina. The British general proposed to cut off the enemy's communication with Virginia, and at the same time to strengthen South Carolina, so that it might not be endangered in his absence: for this purpose he left a considerable body of forces at Charleston, under lord Rawdon. Lord Cornwallis first made an attempt to intercept Morgan, which the dexterity of that partisan eluded. The British army with much difficulty passed the Catawba, and being informed that general

[Battles of Guildford and Camden.]

Greene was posted at Guildford, lord Cornwallis marched towards that place. Greene's force consisted of about six thousand men, while the British did not exceed two thousand; therefore the American general determined to hazard a battle. The enemy were drawn up in the field, with a wood on the right, and other woods both in front and rear; consequently the safest point of attack was on the left wing. At the same time the general was obliged to act with great caution, lest he should fall into an ambuscade from the woods, as Tarleton had done in a similar situation. Major-general Leslie commanded the right wing, colonel Webster the left, Tarleton the cavalry, and his lordship himself the centre. A party of light infantry was stationed in the woods to act as occasion might require. The enemy's first line was soon broken; the second made a very vigorous and gallant resistance, but were at length beaten back to the third line which was stationed in the woods: there the battle became necessarily irregular; the Americans being more accustomed to such a scene of combat, appeared for a short time likely to prevail; but the grenadiers of the seventy-first regiment, having by a rapid movement passed over a deep ravine, charged with such impetuosity as to break the enemy's line: the confusion terminated in a total route. The loss on the side of the British amounted to five hundred men killed and wounded; among those who died of wounds was colonel Webster, an officer very highly esteemed by the general* and the whole army for courage, military skill, and ability. The loss of the Americans was considerably greater, but when compared with their immediate resources, perhaps less in proportion than the loss of the conquerors. From Guildford the British army marched through a wild, inhospitable, and hostile country, and after encountering the severest hardships, arrived on the 7th of April at Wilmington in Virginia. Arnold, meanwhile, made an incursion into the northern parts of Virginia, and plundered the coast. Being soon re-enforced by general Phillips, they made great havoc among the enemy, and were not without hopes of effecting a junction with lord Cornwallis.

General Greene after his defeat at Guildford, spent some time in collecting re-enforcements, which having arrived, he marched to South Carolina, to cut off the communication between lords Cornwallis and Rawdon. The British force in South Carolina was so small, that their situation was extremely precarious: and their provisions were so much reduced, that their noble general was compelled to decline the proffered assistance of a body of loyalists, from absolute inability to afford them maintenance. Lord Rawdon was posted at Camden when Greene arrived: his lordship learned that considerable re-enforcements were expected by the American army; small as his own force was, our general formed a resolution at once bold and wise, to attack the enemy, numerous as they were, before they should be still more powerfully recruited. The Americans were encamped at two miles distance on the brow of a rocky steep,† known by the name of Hobkirk Hill, flanked on the left by a deep swamp, and less fortified on that side, because there they ap-

* Lord Cornwallis announced the death of this valiant officer to his father, the late Dr. Webster of Edinburgh, in a letter, which was published in the newspapers, and universally admired.

† See Andrews, vol. iv.; Stedman, vol. ii.; and Ramsay.

[Siege of Ninety-six—raised by lord Rawdon.]

prehended no danger. Superior genius here acted on the same principle which in this history we have repeatedly seen successful, but especially in seeking and seizing the heights of Abraham.* The commander attempted the most difficult approach, from the well founded presumption that there defence would be the least vigilant. At ten in the morning of the 25th of April, the British troops marched to the enemy round this swamp undiscovered, and entered a wood bordering upon the enemy's left wing. Hence they rushed with such rapid impetuosity as to throw that division of the enemy into an instant confusion, which communicated to the main body. The Americans, however, far superior in number, were enabled to rally, and make a resolute stand: their artillery arriving at this moment, afforded them powerful support, and greatly annoyed the British force. The provincials extended their front to such a length, that lord Rawdon apprehended the intention of surrounding his troops. At this instant he conceived one of those happy designs which the emergencies of war call forth from combined heroism and ability; he ordered his columns to form one line. Thin as this rank was, they charged the enemy with such fury, as proved totally irresistible, routed them, and obtained a complete victory. Whether we consider the design or execution, no action occurred during the war which displayed in a greater degree the united talents, valour, and ready invention, which constitute the soldier and the general: but little availed military excellence, when seconded by political weakness; the re-enforcements intended by ministers to join lord Rawdon, were not sent in proper time. By the late conflict his small band was reduced to eight hundred men, while the Americans, though defeated, were fast recruiting; our valiant commander was thus arrested in the career of victory, and obliged to act on the defensive until fresh troops should arrive. At length, part of the expected re-enforcement arrived at Charleston, and the British general marched downwards to effect a junction. In his absence, Greene invested the strong post of Ninety-six, and at the same time sent a detachment to besiege Augusta in Georgia. Apprehensive that lord Rawdon would speedily return, Greene attempted to take the fort by assault, but the garrison made so vigorous a defence that the Americans were compelled to retire. The day after their retreat the British general arrived: he soon learned that Augusta was taken, and that the besiegers had rejoined the army of Greene. The force of the Americans was now so powerful, that great numbers of the provincials, who had professed obedience to Britain, threw off the mask, and avowed hostility. Finding every thing around him full of danger and enmity, the general perceived the necessity of abandoning Ninety-six, that he might converge his force for the defence of the lower province, and especially the capital. On his march, he heard that a detachment of Americans was posted at Congaree creek, and immediately hastened to that spot. The enemy, by breaking down a bridge, endeavoured to impede the progress of the British; but Rawdon advanced with surprising quickness, a party of his troops waded through the river, drove the enemy from the bank, and cleared a passage for the rest of the army. Lord Rawdon made repeated attempts to bring Greene to battle; but, taught by experience, the wary American skilfully and successfully avoided an encounter.

* See this volume, chap. i.

[Cornwallis enters Virginia. Proceedings of Washington.]

Notwithstanding the enterprise, skill, and genius, so conspicuously displayed by the brave young Rawdon, Greene on the whole succeeded so far as to recover the greater part of Georgia, and the two Carolinas; and had also entirely cut off communication between the British commanders in South Carolina and Virginia. Lord Rawdon having soon after returned to England, the command in South Carolina devolved on colonel Stewart. Greene having both re-enforced his army in numbers, and improved them in discipline, resolved to attack the British forces. On the 8th of September, he put his design in execution, and attacked colonel Stewart at the Eutaws. Great numbers were killed on both sides, without any decisive event; the result, however, was on the whole favourable to the enemy, and the British thenceforward confined their operations to the vicinity of Charleston.

Cornwallis meanwhile entered Virginia, and made considerable progress near its southern coast. On the 25th of May, he joined the body that had been commanded by general Phillips; and in the latter end of June, reached Williamsburgh. His lordship considered it of the highest consequence to command a post on a navigable river, as thus maritime assistance might co-operate with his land forces. He accordingly established himself at Gloucester and at Yorktown, on the opposite banks of York river. The marquis de la Fayette, together with the American general Wayne, were stationed with a powerful body of troops to watch the motions of lord Cornwallis, and without hazarding an engagement, to restrain their operations. Having fortified this position, and taken a general view of the situation of affairs, he formed an opinion that a much greater force than that which he possessed would be necessary for reducing Virginia, and effecting the object of the campaign. He conceived that there could be no hopes of ultimate and decisive success, without very active co-operation on the part of the commander in chief.

Sir Henry Clinton appears not to have coincided in the judgment of the other general: instead of re-enforcing the army in Virginia, he turned his attention solely to the defence of New-York, against which he apprehended an attack from the combined armies. To confirm him in this apprehension, the genius of Washington devised a stratagem which easily imposed on the very moderate sagacity with which the British commander in chief was gifted. General Clinton had intercepted many of the American letters in the course of his command, and published them in the New-York papers. Washington now wrote letters to various officers, declaring that the only effectual mode of saving Virginia was by attacking New-York in conjunction with the French troops; which, he asserted, would be soon attempted; for he was much alarmed at the success of a general, whom from experience he knew to be so fertile in resources, so vigorous in decision, and so prompt and expeditious in improving every advantage. These were (according to the writer's intention) also intercepted, and completely imposed on the British commander in chief. To continue the deception, the two commanders, accompanied by the principal officers of both armies, and attended by the engineers, reconnoitred the island of New-York closely on both sides from the opposite shore; and to render appearances the more serious, took plans of all the works under the fire of their batteries. The arrival of de Grasse was daily expected by the combined generals, and they resolved to proceed by forced marches to Virginia, not doubting that the mass

[Siege of Yorktown. Surrender of the British army.]

of land and sea forces which would then be united, would overwhelm lord Cornwallis, when unassisted by the commander in chief. On the 19th of August they set out, and Clinton considered their departure as only a feint to cover their designs on New-York: they proceeded to Virginia, and joined the army of la Fayette. De Grasse having arrived at the same time, blocked up York river with his ships, while his land forces effected a junction with the Americans. Intelligence had been despatched by sir George Rodney to admiral Graves, that the French fleet was destined for the Chesapeake, and that sir Samuel Hood was on his way to the same place, in expectation of meeting with admiral Graves and the New-York squadron. The despatches having been unfortunately captured, did not reach the admiral. Sir Samuel Hood having arrived off the Chesapeake on the 25th of August, three days before, and being disappointed in his hopes of finding Graves there, proceeded to New York, which he reached on the 28th, and three days after the united squadrons sailed for the Chesapeake, and arrived the fifth of September, with nineteen ships of the line, when they discovered the French fleet at anchor there, amounting to twenty-four ships of the line. A partial engagement took place, in which several British ships were considerably damaged, but without any decisive event on either side. The hostile armaments kept five successive days in sight of each other, but stormy weather having much increased the damage of the British fleet, they returned to New-York to refit. Meanwhile Barras, who had succeeded Terney in commanding the French naval force on the North American station, joined de Grasse; and thus the gallant army under the brave Cornwallis was enclosed and surrounded by an immense naval force, and an army of twenty-one thousand men, whilst his own corps did not exceed six thousand. Not conceiving it possible that sir Henry Clinton would be so completely outwitted, lord Cornwallis expected speedy succours, and made dispositions for a vigorous defence until they should arrive; meanwhile he found it necessary to contract his posts, and concentrate his defences; and the enemy immediately occupied those positions which the British general had abandoned. The trenches were opened by both armies in the night between the 6th and 7th of October; the batteries were covered with little less than one hundred pieces of heavy ordnance, and their attacks were carried on with formidable energy. In a few days most of the British guns were silenced, and the defence rendered hopeless. An express, however, having arrived from N. York, and informed the commander that he might rely on immediate succours, the general persevered in resistance. Two redoubts on the left of the British greatly impeded the progress of the siege. The second parallel of the enemy being now finished, they resolved to open their batteries on these works on the fourteenth of October. The British forces employed every effort to defend the fortifications, but were overborne by the immense superiority of number. The noble commander saw that it would be impossible to withstand a general assault, for which the enemy was now prepared. Finding no succours likely to arrive, and himself surrounded on every side, he conceived a design of forcing his way through a part of the enemy, and making his escape, but found it would be impracticable. Thus hemmed in by a very superior army, through no rashness of his own, but in the skilful and vigorous execution of his part of a concerted plan, this brave leader had no alternative but the sacrifice of his gallant army without an-

[Movements of sir Henry Clinton.]

swering any purpose, or a surrender. On the latter step he at last resolved, and on the 19th of October yielded by an honourable capitulation.

At last sir Henry Clinton set out from New-York to attempt the relief of lord Cornwallis, two months after the departure of Washington and Rochambeau had left him at liberty to proceed to the assistance of the distressed army. He brought with him seven thousand land forces, with a fleet, which was now re-enforced by admiral Digby; consisting of twenty-five ships of the line. Having arrived off the late scene of hostilities, they found that all was over, and that succours so tardily accorded were equivalent to desertion. The French fleet, though still superior to the British, having accomplished their purpose, cautiously avoided any conflict; and the British commanders having no longer any inducement to remain upon that station, returned to New-York.

Such was the fate of the gallant southern army and its valiant commander, from whose antecedent and recent successes sanguine hopes were entertained that the most valuable of the colonies would be recovered, and that the cause of Britain would ultimately prevail. In his laborious marches through the wild and intricate tracts, his lordship received the fullest and most experimental assurances that the people who were asserted by ministry or their adherents to be friendly, were generally hostile; that every attempt to recover America through the Americans themselves, was chimerical, as much as every idea of reducing it by force. The plan he saw had been concerted upon false principles, and he himself had fatally learned that though he and his heroic band had done their utmost, there was almost an equal deficiency of support and co-operation for its execution. The surrender at Yorktown was the concluding scene of offensive war with America. All the profuse expenditure of British wealth, all the mighty efforts of British power, all the splendid achievements of British valour, directed and guided by British talents and skill, proved without effect; the momentous exertions of a war so wasteful of blood and treasure were for ever lost.

CHAP. XXVIII.

Dissatisfaction again prevails in Britain—enhanced by the news from Virginia.—

Out of parliament, a majority becomes inimical to the American war and to ministers.—Meeting of parliament—the king's speech—opposition inveigh with increased energy against ministers—dexterous defence by lord North—preliminary motions against ministers before the recess—manifest difference among opposition on American independence.—General plan of attack against administration now formed and matured—the various parts assigned, while Fox animates the whole.—Fox's proposed inquiry into the management of the navy—negated by a small majority.—Conway's motion for an address to the king to conclude the American war—carried by a majority of nineteen.—Ministers still hold their places.—Lord John Cavendish's motion for the removal of ministers—the minister skilfully addresses himself to different sentiments and opinions—carries a motion for an adjournment—a coalition attempted in vain—the motion repeated by lord Surry.—Administration resigns.—Character of the North administration.—The duke of Richmond's strictures on the execution of colonel Haines—acknowledges he had been misinformed, and makes a satisfactory explanation.—Strictures on the promotion of lord George Germaine to the peerage.—New administration.—The marquis of Rockingham first lord of the treasury.—Mr. Fox and lord Shelburne secretaries of state.—Avowed plan of ministers.—Adjustment with Ireland.—Independence of the Irish parliament acknowledged.—Mr. Grattan's address.—Satisfaction of the Irish nation.—Supplies.—Parts of Mr. Burke's scheme adopted.—Conduct of Mr. William Pitt—connects himself with no party—reckons a chief advantage in our constitution the equipoise of the orders—projects a reform in parliament—proposes a committee to inquire into the state of representation—proposition not considered as a party question.—The younger members the votaries of reform—the older are for adhering to the existing constitution.—Arguments for and against—the supporters of reform outvoted.—Overtures of Mr. Fox for peace with the Dutch.—Premature endeavours to pacify America—Death of the marquis of Rockingham.—lord Shelburne made prime minister—enraged at this appointment, Mr. Fox resigns.—Mr. William Pitt chancellor of the exchequer.—Mr. Fox gives a general account of the reasons of his resignation.—India affairs.—Reports of the committees represent the general system of government to be erroneous and hurtful, and state gross abuses to have been committed by the company's chief servants.—Warren Hastings implicated in the censure.—Exertions of Mr. Dundas.—Bill of pains and penalties against governor Rumbold and his coadjutors.—Session rises.

DURING the recess of parliament 1781, dissatisfaction had begun again to prevail, from incidents and events already mentioned, and especially from repeated instances of alleged misconduct in the ministerial direction of the navy. That source of dissatisfaction being opened, speedily caused others to issue: the immense expenditure, the profuse loans, the enormous increase of taxes, the little avail of all our exertions, presented themselves to the view, and the public were very differently disposed towards ministers, on the approach of the second session of parliament, from what they had been at the beginning of the first. Both dejected and dissatisfied, their gloom and displeasure were dreadfully aggravated by the melancholy news from Virginia. Judging of ministry under the immediate impression of this calamitous event, they hastily imputed our misfortunes to a series of folly, obstinacy, and misconduct. Many who had strenuously recommended perseverance in coercion, now

{Parliament. Charges against ministers.}

reprobated that system which they had most loudly applauded: a majority out of parliament became inimical to the American war and the present ministers: such was the disposition becoming prevalent, when parliament met on the 27th of November.

His majesty's speech, somewhat exceeding the usual length in copiousness of detail, imputed the continuance of the war to the restless ambition of his enemies. He should not discharge the trust committed to the sovereign of a free people, or requite the constant and zealous attachment of his subjects to his person, family, and government, if to his own desire of peace or to their temporary ease and relief, he sacrificed their essential rights and permanent interests. Having mentioned the favourable affairs in the East Indies, he recommended further inquiries into the condition of the dominions and revenues of that country. His majesty stated to the house without palliation or diminution, the unfortunate event of the campaign in Virginia, but adduced it as a ground for a firm confidence in parliament, and more vigorous, animated, and united exertions. The consequent address excited a very interesting debate, in which opposition sketched the principal topics of the charges which they adduced against ministers in the course of the session, and of the counsels which they proposed to be substituted. Their arguments were directed to prove the original folly of the American war; the madness of perseverance in so hopeless a contest; the incapacity, negligence, and mismanagement of the first lord of the admiralty; the ignorance, weakness, and incompetence of administration in their various departments, as well as general system; and the necessity of changing both men and measures. Lord North defended himself and his colleagues, both as to particular counsels and the series of policy, with a dexterity and ingenuity that, if it did not convince impartial readers or hearers, at least impressed them with a high opinion of the speaker's ability.

On the 4th of December, Mr. Burke proposed an inquiry into the conduct of the captors of *St. Eustatius*; a confiscation of effects, he alleged, there took place contrary to national justice and to national policy. To prove his first head, he entered into a very learned and able discussion of the extent of powers acquired by conquerors over an enemy surrendering at discretion; and for this purpose quoted the authority of the most celebrated writers on the law of nations, traced the history of these laws, and their actual state, as elucidated by the concurrent practice of all civilized societies. The feelings of mankind had even exceeded the theories of jurisprudence in mitigating the calamities of war; hence he inferred the necessity, in the present improved state of that code, of interpreting the maxims of law, even in the most mild and favourable sense. He therefore contended, that from the moment of submission, the vanquished parties were entitled to the security of subjects. Having laid down this proposition, he proceeded to a detail of the alleged enormities, which he contended to be contrary to every dictate of justice and humanity, and offered to prove his allegations by testimony. Such cruelty and depredation, by exciting the hatred and enmity of neutral states, were no less impolitic than unjust. Admiral Rodney, without controverting Mr. Burke's general principle, totally denied his statement of the case; the Dutch were at war with us, therefore it was perfectly fair, and consistent with the law of nations that their property captured without a

[Question relative to America. Plan of attack against administration.]

capitulation should be confiscated; he had seized the whole, not for himself and the other captors, but for the crown; he could have no mercenary views, as he did not till long after receive intelligence of the king's intention to bestow the booty on the fleet and army. He knew of no outrage, and never had heard that any was committed by the conquerors. The charge being unsupported by facts and documents, Mr. Burke's motion was negatived. On the 12th of December, the day appointed for considering the army supplies, a motion was brought forward by sir James Lowther concerning the American war, apparently intended to sound the dispositions of the house, and preparatory to more pointed propositions. It was proposed to declare, that the war in North America had been hitherto ineffectual to the purposes for which it was undertaken; and that perseverance in it would be unavailing, and also injurious to the country, by weakening her power to resist her ancient and confederated enemies. On this subject, so often discussed in such a variety of forms, there could be little novelty of argument. But opposition, in the division, ascertained the point which they were most anxious to establish: the minority, amounting to one hundred and seventy-nine to two hundred and twenty, showed that ministers were losing ground. In the course of the discussions which American affairs underwent before the recess, the difference between lord Shelburne's connexions and the Rockingham party, concerning the independence, became more manifest than on any former occasion. Great contests also prevailed in the cabinet, respecting the plan of policy to be adopted in the present emergency. Some of the ministers proposed the total evacuation of America, and the direction of our whole force against the house of Bourbon: but the majority still cast a longing lingering look after the object which they had pursued for so many years. The most sanguine saw now, that all hopes of reducing the whole of the colonies were for ever vanished, but they still fondly fancied that they might preserve a part; and it was therefore determined, that a considerable force should be left at New-York.

During the recess the opponents of ministry were employed in forming and maturing a plan of general attack against administration. The chief conduct was intrusted to Mr. Fox; and the various parts assigned to other senators, were to be directed and supported by this illustrious leader, so admirably fitted for the warfare which he now undertook. Indeed, though it would be difficult to determine in what mode such transcendent powers could be most effectually exerted; it is certain, as an historical fact, that the force and splendour of Mr. Fox's genius *have been* most frequently displayed, not in legislative invention or plans of executory policy, but in reprehensive eloquence; not in devising systems and measures for the wise and beneficial government of the country; but in contending that others have planned and acted unwisely and injuriously. On the 23d of January, the day after the Christmas adjournment expired, Mr. Fox moved an inquiry into the causes of the want of success of his majesty's naval forces during the war, and more particularly in the year 1781. For this purpose, he proposed a committee; which being agreed to by ministers, he, a fortnight after, on the 7th of February, discussed the subject. He traced the naval history from the beginning of the war, and exhibited a summary of the alleged miscarriages of the successive years. In surveying the events of 1780, he, with peculiar energy, exposed the insatiation which sent captain Moutray,

[Motion requesting the king to terminate the American war.]

with the East and West India fleets, so near the enemy's coasts. Having reached 1781, he stated five distinct charges of misconduct in the naval department: 1st, De Grasse was suffered to depart for the West Indies, without any effort to intercept his fleet. He had sailed from Brest on the 22d of March, with twenty-five ships of the line; Darby was at sea on the 13th; but instead of being suffered to pursue the enemy, he had been sent out of the way to Ireland. The second charge was, the loss of the St. Eustatius convoy, which had been captured on its way home; this might have been easily saved by sending a squadron at the time they were expected. The third was a letter sent to the mayor of Bristol from the admiralty, in answer to one from that gentleman, requesting information concerning the combined fleet; the admiralty had misinformed and misled the Bristol merchants, by intimating that the hostile armament was not in the channel, when they knew that it was there, and had thereby endangered the trading ships of that city. The fourth charge was on the force sent to cope with the Dutch; and the fifth, the inadequate fleet sent out with admiral Kempenfeldt. The general defence adduced by lord Mulgrave, in favour of earl Sandwich, was, that he had acted according to information, moral probability, and the existing circumstances. Mr. Fox made a motion, founded on his five charges, that it is the opinion of this committee, that there has been gross mismanagement in the administration of the naval affairs of Great Britain during the course of the year 1781. The question being called for, Mr. Fox's motion was negatived by a majority of only two hundred and five to one hundred and eighty-three. Encouraged by the progressive declension of ministerial majorities, on the 22d of February, opposition, in a motion made by general Conway, proposed to address the king, to put an end to the American war. After both sides had repeated arguments so often employed, the country gentlemen now leaving ministers, Conway's motion was negatived by a majority of only one, being one hundred and ninety-four to one hundred and ninety-three; and opposition cherished hopes of speedy success. Fully confident of victory, Conway, on the 27th of February, proposed the same motion under a different form. The usual arguments being repeated, opposition carried their motion by a majority of two hundred and thirty-four to two hundred and fifteen; and thus, after a contest of eight years, Mr. Fox and his party succeeded in their attempt to procure a vote from the house, for requesting the king to conclude the American war.

The following motion was accordingly carried:—"Resolved, February 27th, in the house of commons, that an humble address be presented to his majesty, most humbly to represent to his majesty, that the farther prosecution of offensive war on the continent of North America, for the purpose of reducing the revolted colonies to obedience by force, will be the means of weakening the efforts of this country against her European enemies; tends, under the present circumstances, dangerously to increase the mutual enmity, so fatal to the interests both of Great Britain and America; and by preventing a happy reconciliation with that country, to frustrate the earnest desire, graciously expressed by his majesty, to restore the blessings of public tranquillity." To this address his majesty returned the following answer: "Gentlemen of the house of commons, There are no objects nearer to my heart, than the ease, happiness, and prosperity of my people. You may be assured, that, in pursuance to

[Motion for the removal of ministers. Defence of lord North.]

your advice, I shall take such measures as shall appear to me to be most conducive to the restoration of harmony between Great Britain and the revolted colonies, so essential to the prosperity of both; and that my efforts shall be directed in the most effectual manner against our European enemies, till such peace can be obtained as shall consist with the interests and permanent welfare of my kingdom."

Ministers had often declared that they would hold their places no longer than a parliamentary majority should sanction their system and measures: it was therefore expected that a resignation would immediately ensue. Lord North and his colleagues, however, continued to hold their places, because they said it did not appear, by any vote or resolution, that parliament had withdrawn its confidence from the present administration: confiding in its increasing strength, the opposite party resolved to bring this question to immediate issue. Accordingly lord John Cavendish, on the 8th of March, proposed resolutions to the following effect: that, from 1775, the nation had expended upwards of one hundred millions in a fruitless war: during which we had lost thirteen colonies, many of our valuable West India and other islands; that the rest were in imminent danger; that we were now engaged in an expensive war with America, France, Spain, and Holland, without a single ally; that the chief cause of these accumulated misfortunes was the united incapacity and misconduct of administration. The three first of these resolutions could not but be admitted as matters of fact: respecting the fourth, which was an inference from the others, Mr. Fox contended, that a long uniform series of calamity and disgrace was a sufficient proof of misconduct: and farther, that weakness and folly distinctly marked each separate measure of every minister, as they collectively pervaded the whole system of administration. Lord North argued, that it was unfair from misfortune to infer misconduct; but that even if misconduct existed, it might be in the execution instead of the plans. The minister, however, was aware, that a direct and pointed answer to the charges could be of little avail; therefore, with his usual dexterous ingenuity he shifted his ground. To draw the attention of the house from the conduct of ministers, the question at issue, he called on them to consider if the present counsellors should be removed, who, probably, would be their successors. His lordship well knew that there were independent members in the house, who, though they disapproved lately of administration, were by no means desirous of being governed by a whig combination. By far the greater number of opposition members either originally were, or had become partisans of that connexion. He was aware, that not only the Rockingham system of ruling the nation by a confederacy, but also various opinions and measures were by no means consonant to the sentiments of all who now voted on their side. Was the house (he said) prepared to new model the constitution, to alter the duration of parliaments, and the rights of elections? Would it consent to a violation of the national faith with the crown, by adopting a celebrated bill of reform in the civil list expenditure? Would it vote the independence of America? on which subject he understood there was as great difference between the two branches of opposition, as between opposition and ministers. Mr. Dundas eminently distinguished himself, and with his usual strength of explicit and direct argument urged the house, before they voted for removing the present ministers and throwing the government into the hands

[Resignation of ministers. Character of the North administration.]

of their opponents, to have it thoroughly ascertained and accurately defined, what the objects of these opponents were; what system they proposed to adopt, and what measures they intended to pursue. These considerations had so much influence, that the supporters of ministers prevailed, and the resolution was negatived by a majority of ten, and a motion was carried for adjourning the house until the 15th. Many moderate and independent members wished for a coalition, which should prevent the country from being entirely governed by any party. Ministers were well inclined to that expedient, and during the adjournment made several attempts to give it effect, but to no purpose. On the 15th, sir John Rous made a motion similar to that of the 8th; no less than four hundred and eighty members were present, when ministers still carried the negative by a majority of nine. The opposite party immediately announced, that the resolutions would be again proposed; accordingly, on the 20th of March, a very crowded house attended, and lord Surry rose to make the promised motion. Before he had begun to speak, lord North rose to communicate to the house information, which (he said) would supersede the necessity of the present motion and require an adjournment. Some disorder arose from what was conceived interruption to lord Surry; but being quieted, lord North informed the house, that there was *no administration*, and moved for an adjournment until new arrangements should be formed. He then took his leave of the commons as minister, by thanking them for their honourable support during so long a course of years, and in so many trying situations. He expressed his grateful sense of their flattering partiality towards him at all times, and their forbearance on many occasions. A successor of greater abilities, of better judgment, and more qualified for his situation, (he said) was easy to be found; a successor more zealously attached to the interests of his country, more anxious to promote them, more loyal to his sovereign, and more desirous of preserving the constitution whole and entire, he might be allowed to say, could not so easily be found. He concluded his speech with declaring he did not mean to shrink from trial, but should always be prepared to meet inquiry, nay, even demanded from his adversaries the strictest scrutiny.

Thus ended the administration of lord North, a period, of which the greater part teemed with calamitous events, beyond any of the same duration to be found in the annals of British history. A war, with so great, productive, and important part of our own community, lost thirteen flourishing and powerful colonies, the promoters of private and public wealth, and the nourishers of national force. Hostilities, whencesoever they arose, ~~not only~~ subtracted from us such constituents of strength, but added them to our inveterate enemies. Year after year our blood and treasure were expended to no purpose; myriads of men were killed, hundreds of millions were lavished without obtaining any valuable object. Temporary gleams of partial success were followed by the permanent gloom of general disaster. Were we to judge from result solely, and to draw a conclusion from the broad principle, that an uniform series of miscarriages in the natural course of human affairs, implies a great portion of misconduct, our estimate of this administration might be easily formed; but general rules, applied to the appreciation of conduct, often require to be nicely modified according to the actual circumstances. I trust it has appeared to the impartial reader, that the chief minister possessed

[Proposed inquiry into the execution of colonel Haines.]

very considerable talents and fair intentions, though mingled with defects, and acting in such emergencies as precluded beneficial exertion and consequences. But however erroneous and hurtful the series of measures was during this administration, far is the blame from being confined to ministers. It indeed belongs chiefly to parliament, which by its approbation sanctioned their acts, and to the people themselves, of whom the greater part was eager for commencing and continuing the war. When the nation censures this burthensome and disastrous war, productive of such an enormous load of taxes, *they must remember that it ORIGINATED IN THEMSELVES.* *very true*

While the house of commons was engaged in the momentous discussions, which I have been narrating, matters of a more personal nature were debated in the house of lords. The duke of Richmond moved for an inquiry into the case of colonel Haines, executed at Charleston, under the following circumstances. Haines, an American officer, having been taken prisoner at Charleston, had demanded his parole, but had been refused, unless he would take the oaths of allegiance. With this alternative he readily complied, and thus bound himself to perform the duties of a British subject. On the faith of his sworn fealty, he was permitted to go and reside on his estate in the interior country at some distance from Charleston; he there raised two hundred men, attacked the innocent inhabitants who would not join his banditti, murdered some, fired the houses of others, and threatened the lives of many who fled; by taking this ungenerous inhuman advantage of the lenity which he experienced he added perjury to a breach of trust, and aggravated the forfeiture of his word by the blackest treachery. By the laws of war as established in the practice of nations, a person taken in arms against the state under which he had accepted his parole was liable to be hanged instantly without any farther proof than what should identify his person. Haines was taken in arms; and, his identity being admitted, he was by lord Rawdon and a board of officers sentenced to be hanged, and accordingly suffered the punishment due to such treachery. General Greene had represented this judgment as a transgression of the laws of nations, and issued a manifesto to that effect, threatening to retaliate on British prisoners; but adduced neither argument nor authority to prove his positions. The duke of Richmond having received some partial account of these circumstances, described the procedure of lord Rawdon and the other officers to have been impolitic, illegal, and barbarous. Lord Stormont and the chancellor stated the actual case, and vindicated the noblemen and gentlemen in question from so heavy a charge. His grace, on reconsidering the subject, was induced to make a satisfactory explanation to the young lord whose name had been called in question, and to declare to the house his high opinion of that brave soldier's humanity* and just intentions, though he still doubted whether the proceeding was strictly legal. It being understood in the house that a peerage was about to be conferred on lord George Germaine, as a mark of royal approbation for his ministerial conduct, opposition, not choosing directly to interfere with the king's right of bestowing that dignity, objected to it on a different

* Lord Rawdon was inclined to save Haines, had such an extension of mercy been consistent with strict justice, and the example to be exhibited to treacherous violators of their parole.

[New administration. Adjustment with Ireland.]

ground, that it was inconsistent with the honour of that house, for a person who had received such a sentence from a court-martial, farther confirmed by his sovereign, to be raised to the peerage. A motion to that effect being made was immediately negatived, as a violent encroachment on the rights of the crown. Some days after, his lordship having now taken his seat in the upper house, the motion was again introduced: viscount Sackville vindicated his own character individually as being by the long confidence of his sovereign purified from the stigma of a sentence of twenty-two years before, under circumstances of very questionable impartiality and equity; and farther asserted the constitutional right of the crown, to bestow the peerage according to its judgment and discretion.

During the adjournment of the house, a new administration was formed: the marquis of Rockingham was appointed first lord of the treasury; the earl of Shelburne and Mr. Fox secretaries of state; lord Camden president of the council; the duke of Grafton privy-seal; lord John Cavendish chancellor of the exchequer; admiral Keppel, who was also created a viscount, first commissioner of the admiralty; general Conway commander in chief of the forces; the duke of Richmond, master-general of the ordnance; lord Thurlow was continued in his office of lord high chancellor, Mr. Dunning was created baron Ashburton, and made chancellor of the duchy of Lancaster. The following were understood to be the public measures which ministers undertook to support: peace with the Americans, and the acknowledgment of their independence was not to be a bar to the attainment of that object; they were to effect a substantial reform in several branches of the civil list expenditure, on the plan proposed by Mr. Burke, the diminution of the influence of the crown; under which article the bills for excluding contractors from seats in parliament, and disqualifying the revenue officers from voting in the election of members, were included. The house adjourned for several days at Easter, and did not meet after the formation of the new ministry, to execute any business until April. On the 8th, Mr. Eden, who had been secretary to lord Carlisle, late lord-lieutenant, exhibited a view of the political history of Ireland, stated means which were then forming for rendering the country totally independent of the British legislature, and concluded with moving for leave to bring in a bill to repeal so much of the act of the 6th of George I. as asserted a right in the king and parliament of Great Britain to make laws to bind the kingdom of Ireland. Mr. Fox informed the house that Irish affairs had already undergone the discussion of several privy-councils, and that the next day, he would be prepared to propose a preliminary measure on the subject; Eden therefore withdrew his motion. The next day messages were delivered to the two houses, recommending such an adjustment as would give mutual satisfaction to both kingdoms. The duke of Portland, the lord-lieutenant, sent a similar message to both the houses of the Irish parliament, in consequence of which an address was moved by the celebrated Mr. Grattan, leader of the popular party. This representation fully and explicitly asserted the independent rights of the kingdom of Ireland, and proceeded to state the causes of those jealousies and discontents which had arisen in that country; the act of the 6th of George I., the power of suppressing or altering bills in the privy-council, and the perpetual mutiny bill. It concluded with expressing the most sanguine expectations from his majesty's virtuous choice of a chief governor, and their great confidence in the wise,

[Part of Mr. Burke's plan of reform adopted. Mr. Pitt.]

auspicious, and constitutional counsels which they had the satisfaction to see his majesty had adopted. On the seventeenth of May, the repeal of the act complained of was moved in the house, and passed without opposition: and the parliament of Ireland was rendered independent on the parliament of Great Britain. In return for the liberal procedure of the British government in relinquishing its claims without any stipulation or condition whatever, the parliament of Ireland immediately voted 100,000*l.* for the purpose of raising 20,000 Irish seamen for the service of his majesty's navy.* The new ministers proceeded to their plans of reform and economy; bills were passed for disqualifying revenue officers from voting in the election of members of parliament, and for rendering contractors incapable of sitting in the house of commons. On the 15th of April, a message was brought from the king, recommending the adoption of a plan for the curtailment of expenses through all the branches of public expenditure. Mr. Burke, now paymaster-general of the forces, revived his plan of reform, and proposed as part of it, a bill to enable his majesty to pay off the debt on his civil list, to prevent the like in future, and to carry into a law the retrenchments which his majesty had graciously proposed to make in his household. Without entering into the detail of the reduction which was effected by this bill when passed into a law, it may be sufficient to state in general, that its annual saving amounted to 72,368*l.* He followed the bill by another, for the regulation of his own office: the principal object of the latter act, was to prevent the possibility of any balance accumulating in the hands of the paymaster general. On the 3d of May, Mr. Wilkes having made his annual motion for expunging the famous resolution of 1769, respecting the Middlesex election, at last succeeded by a majority of 115 to 47.

Mr. William Pitt had voted against lord North's system and measures, but never formed any connexion with the Rockingham confederacy, and accepted no place under the new administration. Young as this gentleman was, he had studied moral and political philosophy more thoroughly, knew them more deeply, radically, and extensively, than most of the ablest men of the time, though matured by experience. He had accurately investigated the history, detail, and spirit of the British constitution, comprehended its objects, principles, and actual state: he conceived it to be the highest effort of human wisdom, and its support essential to the prosperity and happiness of the nation. He saw that, notwithstanding the excellence of our polity, various corruptions had arisen, and various evils had issued from legislature, very pernicious to the country. Considering one of the chief advantages of our system to be the equipoise of the component estates, he imputed recent measures and miscarriages to a derangement in the proper balance. Like other young men of lofty genius, grand conceptions, habituated to scientific processes, and accustomed to generalization, but not yet matured in the practice of affairs, in devising a corrective he formed theories which subsequent experience could not entirely confirm. There was in many parts of the kingdom a disposition of election franchises totally disproportionate both to numbers

* The sum of 50,000*l.* was also voted for purchasing an estate, and erecting a mansion therein, to be settled on Henry Grattan, esq. and the heirs of his body, as a testimony of their gratitude for the unequalled benefits conferred by him on that kingdom.

[He projects a reform in parliament. Proposed inquiry into the representation.]

and to property; and hence there appeared to be a defect in the representation of the commons of England. This inequality was founded neither on alleged merits or property on the part of the electors. In a considerable number of boroughs, there was not only a paucity of voters, but the few that enjoyed franchises were in such a state as to render them in a great measure dependent on individuals. As there were evidently very great abuses in the administration of affairs, as legislature appeared in many instances to have sanctioned measures very detrimental to the country, it was natural to impute the conduct of part of the majorities to the corrupt influence of the crown, and the efficacy of ministerial seduction. To remove the alleged source of evil, many patriotic men projected a reform in parliament. Lord Chatham had been favourable to an alteration in this department of the constitution: his son formed the same general opinion. To the contemplation of philosophical theory it appeared an anomaly in the British polity, that seven thousand individuals should return three-eighths of the national representatives, whilst seven hundred thousand, not inferior in property, merit, or any other constituent of superiority, had not a single vote.* He therefore resolved to propose some plan for improving the representation. Aware, however, of the delicate ground on which he trod, he proceeded very cautiously; intending to investigate facts before he drew a conclusion or constructed schemes, he confined himself to a motion that a committee should be appointed to inquire into the state of the representation in parliament, and to report their sentiments to the house. This subject was not then debated as a party question, but as a proposition of general policy. Of men of talents, the younger, such as Messrs. Fox, Pitt, and Sheridan, were chiefly in favour of the inquiry: the older and more experienced, such as Mr. Burke, lord North, and Mr. Dundas, opposed the agitation of topics which they conceived might excite a ferment in the country. They argued that representation, as it stood, though in theory apparently irregular, assembled in parliament as much collective virtue, wisdom and property, as could be brought together by any mode that might be adopted; that parliament by its present constitution, was as much disposed, qualified, and empowered to answer the ends of legislature, as it could be rendered by any increase or new modification of representatives and electoral franchises. Besides, sentiments had begun to be entertained and inculcated in certain classes respecting government, very different from those of the supporters of the present inquiry in parliament. Doctrines tending to diminish the veneration of Britain for our constitutional establishments, and to recommend the visionary theories of democratical republicanism, were published by men of considerable name and authority, and rapidly spread among their peculiar adherents. Though these sciolists were understood to have no connexion with the ablest and most eminent advocates of parliamentary reform, yet it was easily fore-

* It is probable the great manufacturers of Manchester may be more interested in the prosperity of their country than a journeyman carpenter at Shoreham; that Dr. Samuel Johnson, or Mr. David Hume, might be more competent judges of a lawyer than a journeyman ropemaker of the same noted repository of electors. The capitalists and philosophers had no vote, the labouring mechanics have a vote. Still, however, the property of the man of wealth is protected, and benefits both himself and his country: the talents of the men of genius were remunerated, and produced honour and advantage to their country as much as if they had all possessed a privilege of polling for a member of parliament.

[Death of the marquis of Rockingham. Resignation of Mr. Fox, etc.]

seen that they might arrive at great influence over the weaker votaries of political change, in whose undistinguishing minds their wild and extravagant theories might pass for the soundest philosophy, or the most beneficial lessons of practical wisdom. From these considerations, the most experienced of our able senators opposed the motion, which was negatived by a majority of one hundred and sixty-one to one hundred and forty-one. On the 18th of October, lord John Cavendish moved ten resolutions, by which the house should declare the necessity of proceeding early the next session with those regulations for the reform of the civil list, which it was thought too late to complete in the present. While such measures were proceeding in the senate, Mr. Fox commenced the exertion of his talents as a minister, by offering to Holland the renewal of that peace and amity which had so long subsisted between the respective powers, upon the terms of the treaty of 1674. In order to effect so desirable an object, he proposed hostilities should be immediately suspended: this offer was made through the Russian minister, but was very coldly received by the Dutch, who were not disposed to put an end to the war without their allies. He also made overtures for peace with the Americans: soon after he was appointed minister, he proposed to recognise the independence of the United States of America unconditionally, and not to reserve it as a term of peace. The proposal being agreed to in council, lord Shelburne officially wrote to the commander in chief to communicate this resolution to congress, as well as the determination of parliament to put an end to the American war; but that body would not agree to a separate peace. Before, however, the resolutions of the provincials on this subject could be reported to the British government, an event happened, the consequence of which induced Mr. Fox and his connexions to resign their places in administration. On the 1st of July died Charles marquis of Rockingham, first lord of the treasury; a man of plain and sound understanding, unquestioned probity, great benevolence, the most liberal munificence, and patriotic intentions. He was a lover of the British constitution, but educated in the prejudices as well as principles of the whig party, he early imbibed and always retained an opinion, that it was necessary for the well-being of this country, for its government to be in the hands of a whig connexion. His adherents and supporters either adopted or professed to adopt this opinion; the ablest of these, Messrs. Burke and Fox, extraordinary as their talents were, appeared to rest their consequence less on their individual powers than on the rank which they held in the whig confederacy. On the death of the marquis of Rockingham, the duke of Portland was esteemed by his party the head of the whigs, and on that account the properest person to be first lord of the treasury. His majesty, however, using his prerogative of appointing his own servants, made choice of lord Shelburne. Lord John Cavendish and Mr. Fox soon afterwards resigned their offices, and were followed by the duke of Portland as lord-lieutenant, Mr. Montague from the board of treasury, lord Duncannon and Mr. J. Townshend from the admiralty, Mr. Burke, and Mr. Lee the solicitor-general. Mr. William Pitt was made chancellor of the exchequer, Mr. T. Townshend and lord Grant-ham secretaries of state, Mr. Pepper Arden succeeded Mr. Lee, the lord-advocate of Scotland filled the place of Mr. Barré, who was removed to the pay office, and earl Temple was appointed to the lieute-

[India affairs and reports of the committees.]

nancy of Ireland. Parliament having met the 9th of July, for the first time after this change, Mr. Fox undertook to explain the motives of his late resignation. "It had (he said) been understood by lord Rockingham's friends, that lord Shelburne had, on coming into office, acceded to their measures; that he had sacrificed his own opinion respecting the independency of America to the sentiments of his colleagues; but Mr. Fox found totally different principles were adopted, which he would not then detail, and thought it his duty to resign. He pledged himself, when circumstances would admit of a particular statement of his reasons, to prove that they were well founded."

The two committees continued to bestow unremitting attention on East India affairs. Their reports were voluminous beyond example, and universally allowed to be drawn up with the greatest ability and discrimination. The first object of inquiry and original cause of its being set on foot, was the conduct of judges: this being investigated, produced a report, of which the following are the heads; it appeared that the English judges had taken cognizance of causes between native land holders, not in the service of the company, consequently, by the act of parliament, not within the jurisdiction of the English courts; and had proceeded in several cases to inflict severe penalties on those who refused to acknowledge their authority. The most important instances alleged of extra-judicial assumption, were in civil actions, the Patna and the Cossijurah causes, in the first, two native magistrates, men of rank and respectability, were imprisoned, and their effects confiscated by an English sheriff, for their official conduct in a case which was not under the jurisdiction of the English tribunal. In the second, the rajah of Cossijurah having resisted the jurisdiction of the court, the sheriff had despatched an armed force to compel obedience; but the governor-general and council ordered a more numerous body to march speedily, and prevent what they conceived to be illegal acts. The most noted instance of interference in extra-judicial causes of criminal process, was the trial and execution of Nundcomar for forgery. Nundcomar, a bramin of the highest cast, was tried, condemned, and hanged on a statute of George II. against forgery, strictly confined, and appropriated to England and its paper currency. Neither the person accused, nor the person whose name was forged were subject to the British jurisdiction: by the laws of India, forgery is not punishable capitally; thus a man was put to death by a court to which he was not amenable, for a crime not capital by the laws to which he was amenable. On these reports several resolutions were brought forward by general Smith, some of which were to censure Mr. Sullivan for neglect of duty in delaying to transmit the act of regulation to the servants of the company, and instructions to release the unjustly imprisoned magistrates of Patna; and also for restraining one of the secretaries of the India company, by an oath, from giving information to the committee. The other motions related to the conduct of sir Elijah Impey. On these resolutions, the house addressed his majesty to recall sir Elijah Impey. The committee, in discussing the conduct of judicature, found some proceedings in which Mr. Hastings appeared to have exceeded the authority vested in the governor-general by the act of parliament. The chairman, therefore, proposed that a new act should be introduced to ascertain the power of the governor-general and council of Bengal.

[Exertions of Mr. Dundas. Supplies.]

The secret committee took a much wider range of inquiry than the select committee, and extended its investigations to the proceedings of deliberative and executive offices, as well as judicative; and also included the presidency of Madras with Calcutta. The vigorous genius and indefatigable industry of Mr. Dundas produced one hundred and eleven resolutions, which he arranged into three classes, each of which consisted of three distinct heads; the two first of a public and general nature, the third of personal culpability. The first class regarded the general system of our government in India, and included a severe censure on the conduct of Mr. Hastings and Mr. Hornsby, with a declaration, that it was the duty of the directors to recall these officers of the company from employments in which they had been guilty of flagrant malversation. The second and third classes of resolutions respected the affairs of the Carnatic, and contained very severe animadversions on the general administration of the presidency, with specific charges of great moment against sir Thomas Rumbold, late governor of Madras, Mr. Whitehill and Mr. Perrin, members of the council. Bills of pains and penalties were passed against these gentlemen, and the usual regulations annexed, to prevent themselves from leaving the kingdom, or their effects from being confiscated.

The supplies of the year were one hundred thousand seamen, with nearly the same number of land forces as in the former year. The loan this year was 18,510,000*l.* the terms were near six per cent. but as stocks were so low as fifty-four, and money could not be borrowed at a much cheaper rate, the conditions underwent little animadversion; the new taxes were on insurances, bills of exchange, inland water-carriage and coasting navigation, five per cent. additional duty on all excise and customs on brandies, about ten per cent. on the necessary article of small beer, and twenty per cent. on salt and tobacco: imposts so much affecting the lower classes, were the subjects of loud complaint. On the 11th of July his majesty prorogued parliament, and in his speech steered very clear of every allusion to political changes.

CHAP. XXIX.

West India.—French recover St. Eustatius to the Dutch—invest St. Christopher's—bold attempt of sir Samuel Hood to relieve the island—skilful operations of that admiral—but for want of military force ineffectual.—St. Christopher's surrenders, and also Nevis and Montserrat.—Apprehensions for Jamaica.—Sir George Rodney arriving from Britain with a re-enforcement, resumes the command.—Objects of the admiral.—De Grasse sails from Martinico.—Rodney pursues the enemy, and overtakes them off Guadaloupe.—Battle of the 12th of April—gallant efforts of the French—at length Rodney breaks the line—gains a decisive victory—takes or destroys a great part of the fleet.—Principle of naval warfare illustrated by this victory—important advantages.—Summary of Rodney's exploits against our three naval enemies—created a peer.—North America.—Sir Henry Clinton resigns the command.—succeeded by Carleton.—No active hostilities.—East India.—Pecuniary deficiencies.—Schemes of Mr. Hastings to procure resources for carrying on the war.—The zemindars—tenure of their possessions.—Cheyt Sing—rajah of Benares.—Stipulated subsidy.—Mr. Hastings's view of Cheyt Sing's relation to the company.—Applies for an extraordinary subsidy to answer the company's emergency—granted repeatedly with reluctance.—Hastings repeats his demand.—Proceeds to Benares to enforce compliance.—Conduct of Cheyt Sing and his people—he flies from Benares.—Alleged disaffection and machinations of the Begums.—At the instance of Mr. Hastings their treasures confiscated.—Hastings detaches the Mahratta prince from the confederacy of native powers.—Suffrein expects to crush the British naval force in India—disappointed.—Various conflicts between him and sir Edward Hughes—though not decisive, are favourable to Britain.—Campaign of sir Eyre Coote against Hyder Ally.—Colonel Braithwait's corps surprised and overpowered by Tippoo Saib.—Signal victory of sir Eyre Coote at Red-hill.—Hyder Ally completely discomfited—worn out by fatigue, sir Eyre Coote resigns the command.—Hastings succeeds in putting an end to the Indian confederacy.—Operations of sir Edward Hughes.—Expedition against Mysore from the Malabar coast.—Tippoo Saib surprises general Matthews in a defile, and captures his detachment.—Death of sir Eyre Coote, the military saviour of India.—Hastings the political saviour.—Farther operations stopt by intelligence from Europe.—Europe.—Siege of Minorca by a great armament—the garrison after a gallant defence capitulates.—Fleets of France, Spain, and Holland.—Admiral Barrington intercepts part of a French convoy destined for the East Indies.—Exploit of captain Jervis.—Lord Howe prevents the Dutch fleet from sailing.—Combined fleets sail to the channel—disappointed, they return southward.—Loss of the Royal George and admiral Kempenfeldt.—Renewed preparations against Gibraltar—enormous battering ships—large army and fleet—the besiegers calculate that twenty-four hours would reduce Gibraltar.—Elliot anticipates their attack—pours red hot balls on their batteries—again destroys their preparations, and shows their hopes to be groundless—they again attempt to blockade.—Lord Howe sails to supply and relieve Gibraltar—effects his purpose in the face of a much superior fleet—offers the enemy battle, which they decline.—General purpose of Bourbon ambition against Britain frustrated.—Britain maintains the sovereignty of the sea.—The belligerent powers at length convinced that their hostilities are reciprocally ruinous.—Overtures for a general peace—the preliminaries signed at Paris.—Independence of America acknowledged.—Treaties between Britain and the respective powers.—General view of this arduous contest.—Her resistance against such a confederation of foes manifested the immense resources—lofty genius and invincible spirit of the British nation.—Folly of naval states provoking to hostilities the mistress of the ocean.—Consequences proximate and eventual to the respective parties.

[St. Eustatius invested by the French. Attempt to relieve the place.]

In the close of the year 1781, while the British fleet was unsuccessfully occupied in attempting to relieve the army in Virginia, the marquis de Bouillé, governor of Martinico, invaded St. Eustatius with two thousand men, easily subdued that island, being defended by only seven hundred men belonging to the thirteenth and fifteenth regiments. Besides the inferiority of force, the garrison having no expectations of such an attempt, were in a state of security, and indeed oscillancy, which greatly facilitated the success of their enemies. A considerable part of the effects captured by the British still remained on the island, so that it proved a very valuable prize. In the beginning of January, the French retook the Dutch settlements of Demarara and Essequibo, and by restoring them to Holland, confirmed the amity of the aristocratic party in that country towards their new ally. The count de Grasse was now returned from North America to the Leeward Islands, and commanded a fleet of thirty-two ships of the line. Sir Samuel Hood was also come back to Barbadoes. Trusting to their superiority, the French commanders made an attempt on the valuable island of St. Christopher's. The land forces under the command of de Bouillé, consisted of eight thousand men, escorted and seconded by the fleet. On the 11th of January, they effected a landing. The British garrison commanded by general Fraser, did not exceed six hundred men; taking possession however of a very strong post, the commandant fortified himself, in hopes of holding out till succour should arrive. The whole military force of Britain in those islands was inconsiderable; notwithstanding this consideration, and the comparative smallness of his naval force, sir Samuel Hood determined to venture one of those bold measures which have generally terminated with victory to British arms, and which in her relative situation to her foes, instead of being chargeable with temerity, are the wisest that can be pursued. He departed from Antigua, took on board general Prescott and the few troops that could be afforded, and immediately sailed to attack the enemy's fleet. The count de Grasse was much surprised at the appearance of the English fleet, and expecting to profit by what he deemed their rashness; thinking that by an increase of sea-room he could the more easily avail himself of his superior numbers, he moved away from shore. Sir Samuel Hood instantly saw the advantage that might be derived from the enemy's departure, and while they were forming their line a-head, pushed into the road which they had left. The enemy were not only astonished at the ability and judgment with which this design was conceived and formed, and the boldness and nautical skill with which it was executed, but alarmed at the consequences which must ensue from its success. They were apprehensive that the British fleet might cut off the communication between the French naval and military force. Hoping to overpower our armament by their numbers, they on the 25th of January attacked the rear of the squadron commanded by commodore Affleck; but that brave officer, seconded by lord Robert Manners and captain Cornwallis, (heroes worthy of the marquis of Granby and earl Cornwallis,) and the other ships of the division, repelled the enemy. The next day de Grasse made a general attack, but he was again repelled with severe loss; and sir Samuel Hood retained his position between the enemy's fleet and army, without any farther interruption. Meanwhile the French general had made considerable progress in the investment of the fort; but from the strength of the place, small as the garrison

[Progress of the French. Junction of the British fleets.]

was, he found that a regular siege would be necessary. On the 16th of January he opened the trenches, proceeded with the works and mounted his batteries, which soon played with terrible effect. The British continued to make the most gallant resistance: admiral Hood sent general Prescott ashore, in hopes to be able to assist the besieged; but finding the attempt impracticable, from the number and disposition of the enemy, re-embarked his troops. The garrison, after having with the greatest patience and fortitude withstood the host of their enemies, became every day weaker both in number and fortifications; and at last finding all their efforts hopeless, agreed to a capitulation which was concluded on honourable terms. The French fleet being joined by two ships, admiral Hood, now, that the preservation of the island was no longer in view, resolved not to hazard an engagement until a re-enforcement which was daily expected should arrive from England, he therefore quitted his present situation, and retired towards Antigua. The islands of Nevis and Montserrat followed the fortune of St. Christopher's: so that of all our former valuable possessions in the West Indies, Jamaica, Barbadoes, and Antigua, now only remained, and affairs wore a very inauspicious aspect to the British interests. Jamaica the great object of Spanish ambition, was now proposed to be attacked by the count de Grasse, who was to be joined by a Spanish fleet and army for that purpose. The Spaniards had stationed at Hispaniola and Cuba, about twenty-six ships of the line and a considerable body of soldiers: the fleet, when combined, would amount to sixty ships of the line, the troops to about twenty thousand; and a great naval and military re-enforcement was daily expected under admiral Guichen. The land force of Britain, in Jamaica, consisted of six battalions of regulars, amounting to two thousand four hundred men, and the militia about double that number. From the British fleet, so outnumbered, they could have expected little assistance. The goodness of the troops, the zeal and bravery of the inhabitants, together with the natural strength of the country, might have long withstood so mighty a host, and perhaps, ultimately, with the assistance of the climate so peculiarly fatal to Spanish indolence, repelled the invaders: but the conflict would have been arduous, and a great part of the valuable property must have been destroyed during its operations; the well grounded apprehension therefore of such an attempt was extremely alarming to the islanders themselves, and to all interested in the fate of so estimable a possession. While affairs were in this situation, and the hopes and fears of the contending parties so anxiously aroused, intelligence arrived that Guichen's fleet and convoy, after their encounter with admiral Kempenfeldt, had been shattered by successive tempests; and unable to proceed on their voyage, returned to France, and two ships of the line only were strong enough to join de Grasse.

On the 19th of February, sir George Rodney with twelve ships of the line arrived from England at Barbadoes, and a few days after joining sir Samuel Hood, took command of the whole fleet before the end of the month; being re-enforced by two more ships of the line from England, the British fleet consisted of thirty-six ships of the line. Having received information that a second convoy had sailed from Brest, in order to compensate to a certain degree the failure of the former, and was conveying provisions, naval and military stores, he tried to intercept it before it reached de Grasse; but the French convoy found means to elude the

[De Grasse sails from Martinico. Pursuit by the British.]

danger, and to join the admiral on the 20th of March, in Fort Royal, where he was repairing his ships with a view of sailing as soon as possible to the westward: admiral Rodney stationed himself off St. Lucia to watch his motions. It was the object of the French admiral to avoid fighting, until he should join the Spaniards at Hispaniola; the British commander proposed to prevent the intended junction, and to bring the French to a decisive battle. The fate of the British West Indies depended on the success or miscarriage of the admiral's design; if the two hostile fleets joined, our naval force would no longer be able to preserve our islands from ruin. If Rodney could bring de Grasse to fight, the former having thirty-six ships of the line, the latter thirty-four, but balancing our superiority of number by size, weight of metal, and a greater multitude of men, the fleets would be very near an equality of physical force; consequently there could be little doubt that the ability, skill, and prowess of England would be triumphant. De Grasse was stationed at Martinico; admiral Rodney at Gros Islet bay in St. Lucia, and his fleet ready to sail, the van was commanded by admiral Drake, the rear by sir Samuel Hood, and the centre by Rodney himself. Frigates were disposed near the French fleet to give the English admiral intelligence if they sailed. Accordingly, on the 8th of April, news arrived that de Grasse had weighed anchor, and in a very short time the same day Rodney began to follow his course. De Grasse, in order to avoid the British fleet, instead of sailing directly westward to Hispaniola, chose a northern and circuitous course along the coast of Gaudaloupe. Had he proceeded in the direct track which was to leeward, he thought he could not avoid being overtaken by the English, but by coasting between the islands, as the French were much better acquainted with these channels, he expected to baffle their pursuit. The British signals, however, were repeated with such quickness and exactness through the intervening stations, that the fleet sailed within five hours of the French, and came in sight of them that very same night near Dominica. De Grasse, thinking that a distant and running fight would be unavoidable, formed his line for that purpose. Early next morning when sir George Rodney was making dispositions for battle, he found himself becalmed. A breeze however reached the van between eight and nine in the morning, without extending to the centre and rear. The first division of the British fleet being thus separated from the rest, count de Grasse willingly engaged, hoping by his whole fleet to cut off the advanced part of ours. Notwithstanding the superiority of the enemy, sir Samuel Hood made so bold a stand as to sustain all their efforts, though not without his ships suffering material damage. At length Rodney himself being able to come up with part of the centre division, the battle became less unequal. De Grasse, who from the command of the wind could either fight closely or distantly, drew off his fleet, and before the rest of the British arrived, was entirely out of reach of battle. The next day admiral Rodney was obliged to employ in refitting the damaged ships, and transposing the van and rear, as those who had not been in the late action were the fittest for beginning a new conflict. On the 11th, the enemy's fleet weathered Gaudaloupe, and got to such a distance that they were barely perceivable. About noon that day two of the enemy's ships were seen so much astern of the rest of the fleet, that the British had no doubt of cutting them off: a signal for general chase was thrown out. The pursuit was so vigorous

[Battle off Guadaloupe, and victory of the British.]

that they would have been undoubtedly captured had not the whole French fleet returned for their protection. This movement gave the British commanders infinitely more delight, than they would have derived from the possession of the two ships. They perceived that the enemy could not avoid a close engagement, and during the night the line was formed in a most masterly disposition. The enemy, sensible that they must now fight, were also arranged with great skill. The scene of action was a basin of water lying between the islands of Guadaloupe, Dominica, the Saints, and Marigalante; and bounded both to windward and leeward by dangerous shores.

On the 12th of April, at seven in the morning, the hostile fleets met upon opposite tacks. The signal for close fighting was thrown out and punctually observed, the line was formed at only a cable's length distance, our ships as they came up ranged slowly and closely along the enemy's line, and under their lee, where they gave and received a tremendous fire. Admiral Drake, who now commanded the van, began the battle with the greatest gallantry: received, and with the most efficacious energy returned the shot of the whole French line. His leading ship the Marlborough, commanded by captain Penny, was peculiarly distinguished, received and returned at the nearest distance the first broadside of twenty-three French ships of war, and had the fortune only to have three men killed, and sixteen wounded. As the ships were so near, every ball took effect, and the French ships being very full of men, great numbers were slain. The French made a most gallant resistance, which they were enabled to do the more effectually as the British rear was long prevented by a calm from taking any active share in the battle. They had fought five hours, before the British, though evidently the more forcible, had gained any decisive advantage; when between twelve and one o'clock, Rodney, with four ships, bore athwart the enemy, and broke their line; being admirably supported by his division, he doubled upon them, separated their force, and threw them into irrecoverable disorder. As soon as he had effected this movement, he threw out a signal for the van to tack; admiral Drake instantly complying, by this means got to windward of the enemy, and completed the general confusion. The French van bore to leeward in an attempt to restore their broken line, but could not succeed. Meanwhile sir Samuel Hood had reached the scene of battle with part of his division, and contributed to crush the enemy. Even after all order and connected system was entirely destroyed on the part of the French, their ships singly and severally fought with the most inflexible courage. De Grasse himself, in the *Ville de Paris*, after the route became general, made a most obstinate resistance, but at last struck to sir Samuel Hood. The *Hector*, the *Glorieux*, the *Cæsar*, of 74 guns, the *Ardent* of 64, were also captured; the *Diadem* was sunk; three thousand of the enemy were killed or drowned, and six thousand were wounded, and about two thousand taken prisoners: most of their ships that escaped being taken or sunk, were so damaged as to be unfit for service. The loss on the side of the English was about a thousand killed and wounded; among the slain was captain Blair, who eminently distinguished himself on that glorious day, and also had acquired great renown the year before, in the *Dolphin* man of war. Among the wounded was lord Robert Manners, brother to the duke of Rutland; this brave young nobleman, though not twenty-seven years of age, had

[Principle of naval warfare illustrated. Summary of Rodney's exploits.]

acquired distinguished glory in the *Resolution*, a seventy-four gun ship, during a series of brilliant actions, which he crowned in the last conflict. His wound proved mortal, and deprived the country of his virtues a few weeks after the victory.

Naval critics in reviewing the operations which terminated in so brilliant a victory to Britain, have adduced, or at least confirmed general principles of the highest importance to the service. In the first place, they observed it illustrated the wise policy of a commander of British ships and British sailors being adventurously bold. If admiral Rodney, when he found the rear division becalmed, had endeavoured to avoid battle, the enemy might have escaped; it also showed, that in close fight British ships and seamen possess a very great superiority, and that the increase of their advantage in proportion to their closeness, renders it generally expedient for British commanders to break the enemy's line. The consequences of this victory were important and extensive, thirty-six chests of money, destined to pay the army and fleet in the West Indies, were found in the *Ville de Paris*.*

The day after the battle admiral Rodney endeavoured to pursue the remains of the French fleet, but was becalmed for three days at Guadeloupe. Sir Samuel Hood, having been but a short time in the fight, was fitter for pursuit than the other ships, the admiral therefore despatched that commander in hopes of overtaking or intercepting the remains of the enemy. On the 19th of April he captured two ships of the line in the Mona Passage, between Porto Rico and Hispaniola. Admiral Rodney proceeded with the disabled ships and prizes to Jamaica, was rejoined by sir Samuel Hood off Cape Tiberoon in St. Domingo; and in the end of April having arrived at the place of his destination, was received by the grateful islanders as their glorious deliverer. Rodney indeed had been the most brilliant promoter of naval glory, the effectual supporter of naval power, and beneficial protector of commerce and wealth to this country, of any personage whose actions reflected a lustre on the annals of the American war; in two years and a quarter he had struck a severe blow against each of our three European enemies. In his victory over the Spaniards, he broke that naval force which some months before ostentatiously paraded on our coasts; reducing the Dutch, he deprived them of the chief sinew of war; by the discomfiture of the French he completely overthrew all the mighty projects of the Bourbons for exalting themselves by ruining our plantations and marine force. He showed himself a gallant and skilful sailor and an able commander, that could direct all the excellence of British ships and British seamen. Such a commander supplied with a force equal to the enemy, was successful, and always must be successful. This victory not only secured our West India possessions, but in a great degree ended the West India war, as no operations of any importance were afterwards undertaken in that part of the world. Soon after sir George Rodney had so essentially served his king and country, intelligence arrived that the new administration had resolved he should

* This ship had a hundred and ten guns, and no less than thirteen hundred men, including soldiers, on board. She had been a present to Louis XV. from the city of Paris, during the low state of the French navy resulting from the last war in which that prince had been engaged with England. She had cost one hundred and seventy-six thousand pounds before she was fitted for sea, and was the only first rate man of war that had ever been captured.

[America. East Indies. Schemes of Mr. Hastings.]

serve no longer, and had appointed admiral Pigot to take the command in his stead. Whatever that gentleman's talents might be, his situation had never afforded him opportunities of such exertion or display as to demonstrate the policy of the minister, who, to avail himself of Mr. Pigot's professional efforts, superseded admiral Rodney. Our gallant veteran relinquished a command in which he had now left so little undone, and returned home to enjoy the gratitude of his king and country, and the honours which had been conferred by his sovereign. The victorious admiral was called to the house of lords, because he had made the best of a force intrusted to his command, by conquering the enemy and discomfiting their designs. Sir Samuel Hood also, who next to admiral Rodney had so eminently distinguished himself, was promoted to the well earned honour of an Irish peerage. Messrs. Drake and Affleck for their respective services were created baronets.

In North America, sir Henry Clinton having resigned the command, was succeeded by sir Guy Carleton, but no military transactions of any importance took place in this campaign. The resolutions against the American war, and the negotiations for peace, although they did not induce the provincials to a separate treaty, yet in a great measure suspended hostilities. The armies, indeed, were nearly equal in strength, Carleton had no motive to attack the enemy for the sake of advancing in a country into which all progress was now renounced, and Washington had no inducement to assail a force which was still very formidable. The Spaniards finding all their hopes of important conquest in the West Indies disappointed, employed their armaments in less considerable enterprises. The governor of Cuba, with five thousand men, made an attack on the Bahama islands, which being defended by about two hundred only, capitulated. The French, with the remainder of their beaten fleet, concerted a predatory expedition against the property of the Hudson's Bay company, and acquired a considerable booty. On the other hand, the English made a successful excursion to the Musquito shore, and captured fort Dalin, with a great number of Spanish troops.

In Africa, the Dutch were dispossessed of most of their settlements, except the Cape of Good Hope; but they were still able to retain this important key to India.

While in the Carnatic those warlike preparations were carrying on which are narrated among the transactions of 1780 and 1781, the governor-general was not inactive in Bengal. Aware of the dispositions of the native powers to join in the confederacy against British India, it was an important part of his duty to counteract their designs. He had also the task of providing resources and means of defence against both treacherous friends and professed enemies. The expenses of the present war, in which all the English presidencies were so deeply, and one at least dangerously involved, rose to such a height, that even the finances of Bengal proved unequal to their supply. It was therefore necessary, not only to be very strict in exacting the revenue, but either to create new sources, or to relinquish the defence of our possessions in India. The governor-general anxiously desirous of securing such valuable interests, appeared to think that the preservation of British India might justify measures that nothing but political necessity could sanction. The Indian landholders are called zemindars, and the chief zemindars are called rajahs. The great estates appeared to have held of the mogul, as lord

[Cheyt Sing. View of his relation to the company. Demands of Mr. Hastings.]

paramount of the soil : the inferior zemindars to have held of the rajahs. A doubt was alleged, whether the tenure of the zemindars was stable on the performance of certain conditions, or dependent on the discretion of the superior in the various degrees, from the lowest tenant to the emperor. The former mode would unquestionably be the most consonant to the ideas of freeborn Britons, but the latter was no less agreeable to the analogy of Mahomedan despotism. Whatever power the emperor himself possessed over the lands or effects of the zemindars, he delegated to the collectors of revenues, and consequently had transferred to the India company over the provinces of Bengal, Bahar, and Orissa, by the treaty concluded in 1764. The extent and limits of the jurisdiction which by this treaty the company acquired over either the lands or effects of the inhabitants, were to be defined not by any reference to British rules of property, but by the usage and laws of India. Lord Clive, at the treaty of Illahabad, had guaranteed to Bulwart Sing, the zemindary of Benares, subject to the payment of the former revenue to the nabob of Oude. The guarantee did not extend to the rajah's family, and on the death of Bulwart Sing, in 1770, it appeared that the zemindary of Benares was not hereditary, as Cheyt Sing, the late rajah's son, paid to the nabob a fine of two hundred and fifty thousand pounds, with an increase of rent of three hundred thousand pounds, in order to be admitted to his father's tenements.* The nabob afterwards endeavoured to extort one hundred and twenty-five thousand pounds more from his vassal, which though prevented by the interference of Mr. Hastings, afforded a presumptive proof of the discretionary tenure by which the zemindary was held. In 1775, under Sujah Dowla, the nabob of Oude, the sovereignty of Benares was transferred to the company, and thus Cheyt Sing became vassal to that body on precisely the same tenure as he had before been to the nabob of Oude. Mr. Hastings, soon after this agreement, authorised his resident to assure Cheyt Sing of the company's approbation of his conduct, and on that account that he should be allowed to occupy the zemindary on the same conditions as before, and at the same time recommended him to raise a body of two thousand horse. Mr. Hastings, from the analogy of Indian tenures, considered Cheyt Sing as a tenant at will, with a general promise of holding his lands during good behaviour, and thought himself the steward of the proprietor, entitled to interpret the goodness of the tenant's conduct, by the fidelity and gratitude which he should manifest towards the proprietors, from whose bounty he was allowed to retain his lands.† The requisite exertions might be greater or less according to circumstances ; it was evident that the terms on which he held Benares were extremely advantageous, and as obviously Mr. Hastings appeared to conceive that his tenure was good conduct and attachment to the company. His dispositions, the state of affairs soon put to the test : intelligence being received of the war with France, and a variety of circumstances having intimated the design of a native confederacy, it was determined by the governor-general and council, in the month of July 1778, that the rajah Cheyt Sing should be required to contribute an extraordinary subsidy of five lacks of rupees towards the expenses which this new exigency would impose on govern-

* Annual Register, 1783, chap. i.

† This may be gathered from his defence, and the writings of his friends.

[Evasions of the rajah. Mr. Hastings resolves to enforce compliance.]

ment during the current year. The rajah paid this advanced rent with great unwillingness; the next year he testified much stronger reluctance, although the increase of hostilities rendered supplies still more indispensably necessary; and though known to be extremely rich, pretended to be in the most distressing poverty. Mr. Hastings found him so slow in his payments, that he sent two battalions of sepoys to Benares to be paid and subsisted by the rajah, until he made good the required sum. The third year he made still stronger professions of poverty, and the subsidy was procured with greater difficulty. In 1781, when the designs of the confederacy had not only unfolded themselves, but in the Carnatic were carried into successful execution, the same additional subsidy was demanded, and also the two thousand horse which he had been desired to keep in readiness when protection was promised him by the company on his first having become their vassal. It is to be observed, that the whole amount of the extraordinary subsidy imposed, from so urgent a necessity, on this tributary, was only one fifth of his yearly rent; that he was extremely rich, and could well afford the addition, which was much less than his former superior, or any other native chief acting upon the discretionary principles of Asiatic governments, would have exacted. Even after paying the demand he was not in a worse, but in a better situation as the tenant of the company, than that in which he would have been as the tenant of Oude, or any other oriental state. The rajah baffled the demands by repeated evasions, and at this time (the beginning of 1781,) when the possessions of the company were in the greatest danger, and her want of assistance both in men and money most urgent, Cheyt Sing much more manifestly displayed his reluctance to contribute aid than in preceding years.* All the countries adjoining the rajah's territories were either openly or secretly engaged in the combination; from that circumstance, together with the rajah's unwillingness to support the cause of the company, the governor-general suspected Cheyt Sing to be connected with the hostile confederacy. Various accounts, both from English residents at Benares and the neighbouring countries, confirmed the suspicion. Mr. Hastings now being extremely straitened from want of money for paying the company's troops and other services, and farther desirous of exploring the intentions and designs both of the rajah and others who professed amity, resolved to make a progress into the upper country. Impressed with an opinion of the rajah's culpability, the governor-general had privately resolved that, if on examination he found him really hostile, the punishment of treacherous designs to injure the company should be such a fine as would relieve their present exigencies. Accordingly he proceeded to Benares: the rajah met him on the frontiers, expressed his complete submission, made protestations of the most zealous fidelity and attachment to the company, and declared that his zemindary and all his possessions were the gift of the company, and at their command. Mr. Hastings little moved with these general professions of friendship, after arriving at Benares, made specific charges of infidelity and disaffection to the English government, from which he held his zemindary; of internal tyranny and oppression, contrary to the tenure of his vassalage; and of evasion respecting the payment of subsidies. The rajah denied these charges, and endeavoured to refute them, but not to the governor's

* See Annual Register, 1783, c. l.; and Thomson's War in Asia.

[Flight of the rajah. Proceedings against the begums.]

satisfaction: to make him more compliant, he put Cheyt Sing under an arrest. The inhabitants of Benares rushed in great numbers upon a small party of two companies which guarded Sing's person, cut them to pieces, and rescued the rajah. The governor himself was in considerable danger, having but a small body of attendants in the midst of a hostile multitude. Finding the disorderly spirit of the people he sent for troops from different quarters to come to Benares, the rajah fled to a distant place of refuge, from thence he sent a suppliant letter, to which Mr. Hastings made no answer. A war broke out in Benares; the governor soon subdued that country, and took possession of the treasures of the rajah. Immense sums were found in his treasury, which proved that his excuses of poverty were totally unfounded. Cheyt Sing published a manifesto addressed to other rajahs, in which he attempted to justify himself, and stir up his neighbours against the British name, and immediately afterwards retired into banishment.

Mr. Hastings considering this insurrection at Benares as a rebellion, deemed it part of the great combination against British India. It appeared to him that Cheyt Sing had been warmly supported by the neighbouring province of Oude, especially in the countries that were governed by the begums, or dowager princesses, who according to the customs of India had, for the support of their widowhood, the investiture of certain demesnes and treasures under the name of jaghires. The begums of Oude were the mother and grandmother of the reigning prince. The nabob came down to Chunar, with the professed intention of paying his respects to the governor-general, accompanied with a considerable number of troops: Mr. Hastings by no means approved of this visit, he had no occasion for the nabob for quelling the commotions in Benares, and was not without suspicions of the treachery so incidental to the feeble and timid characters of oriental despotism; not, however, choosing to communicate to the nabob his distrust, he expressed his acknowledgements for his kind attention, and at Chunar they met. Mr. Hastings being well informed of the proceedings of the begums, consulted with sir Elijah Impey, whether, they being in actual rebellion, the nabob might not confiscate their property; sir Elijah answered in the affirmative. Fortified with this authority, Mr. Hastings appeared to entertain no doubt of the legality of the principle; but it was necessary to the purposes of equity and justice to examine the fact: in this investigation he requested the assistance of the judge, who undertook to collect testimonies, and the result was, that the begums had abetted the rebellion of Cheyt Sing. Having ascertained this fact to his satisfaction, and also that they were hostile to the government of the nabob himself, he entered into a treaty with that prince; one article of which was, that as great distress had arisen to the nabob's government, from the military power and dominion assumed by the begums, he should be permitted to resume such of their lands as he might deem to be necessary. As the nabob acknowledged a great debt to the company, the proceeds of the confiscation were to be applied to liquidate that demand, and consequently to increase the pecuniary resources of the company when supplies were so much wanted. The nabob having returned to Oude, and not having immediately proceeded to the forfeiture stipulated in the treaty, was strongly urged not only to seize a part but the whole of the effects as confiscated in consequence of the rebellion: that prince at last enforced the act, and dispossessed the be-

[Peace with the Mahratta prince. Operations of the French.]

gums of all their treasures.* Such was the procedure of Hastings respecting Cheyt Sing and the begums, which the narrator considers, with its ostensible reasons, as part of the series of British affairs in India that it is his duty to relate, though he conceives it unnecessary to canvass all the assertions and attempted arguments, all the replies and attempted refutations, that arose from this subject. Leaving the moral rectitude and judicial legality of Mr. Hastings's conduct with the appropriate tribunal by which it has been already discussed, the history proceeds to the political effects of the expedition. It afforded the company the means of paying their troops, increasing their resources, and redoubling their exertions against the combined enemies. It prevented the native powers from effectually joining the confederacy, and served also to detach one important sovereign, Moodejee Sindia, the Mahratta prince, from the alliance. A peace was concluded, in October 1781, between him and Mr. Hastings;† so that, on the whole, the measures of Mr. Hastings, at this time very essentially served the British cause.

The French, we have seen, had formed expectations of ruining the British interests through themselves and the confederacies which they instigated in the eastern as well as the western world; and with that view sent a squadron with a powerful body of forces, under monsieur Suffrein, to India. Sailing from the Cape of Good Hope, Suffrein joined monsieur de Orves at the island of Mauritius: the French commander, with a fleet of ten ships of the line, one fifty gun ship, several large frigates, and a multitude of transports and store vessels, having on board a numerous body of land forces, sailed in January, 1782, for the coast of Coromandel: M. de Orves dying on the passage, the sole command of the fleet devolved on M. de Suffrein. A British convoy, under general Meadows, was proceeding with troops for India, and two ships of the line and two fifties; the Hannibal, one of the latter, was taken by the enemy; but the rest of the fleet reached Madras, the place of their destination. On the 31st of January, sir Edward Hughes was obliged to sail from Trincomale for Madras, to procure a supply of stores and provisions, and refit his ships. At his arrival on the 8th of February, he was informed by lord Macartney, the new governor, that a French armament amounting to thirty sail had been seen on the coast, and was supposed not to be above twenty leagues to the northward. Admiral Hughes had only six ships of the line, with the crews in a very indifferent condition, when he was the following day re-enforced by the two ships of the line and one of fifty guns, which were just arrived from England. Sir Eyre Coote with great alacrity and expedition assisted him in manning his ships from the land forces; and having now his stores and provisions on board, on the 15th of February he saw the French fleet bearing directly to Madras, with ten sail of the line, two fifties, and six frigates. Suffrein had expected to find only six English ships of the line, and hastened, in all the vivacity of French fancy, hoping to overpower the English fleet and thereby co-operate so effectually with Hyder Ally as to reduce Madras; and by a little farther extension of the imagination, anticipated the speedy ruin of British India. The pleasing reverie of Suffrein met with a disagreeable interruption in the view of nine ships of war prepared to ob-

* Annual Register, 1783, chap. i.

† *Ibid.* and Thomson's War in Asia.

[Naval engagements--consequences favourable to the British.]

struct his progress : on this discovery he immediately stopped, and soon after drew off his fleet to the southward.* Admiral Hughes immediately followed, and the next day descried the French ships of war to the eastward : while the convoy escorted by frigates was steering south towards Pondicherry, the British admiral threw out a signal for chase, with the double view of capturing the convoy and inducing the French admiral to return to attempt their relief. In the course of the pursuit the British ships retook five English prizes with their crews and cargoes, and captured a sixth, that proved to be a very important advantage : she was a large French transport of thirteen hundred tons, containing a considerable train of artillery and a great quantity of gunpowder and other military stores for Hyder Ally, with three hundred soldiers on board. Meanwhile the French fleet endeavouring to assist the convoy, obliged the British admiral to recall the chasers ; and having ordered the prizes to be sent to Negapatam, he prepared to form the line of battle. On the 17th of February, early in the morning, the admiral threw out the signal for forming in a compact order, so as to prevent the enemy from profiting by their superiority ; but the weather was extremely unfavourable to the collection of his ships. The enemy perceiving the British squadron, notwithstanding every effort of both commander and officers, to be still dispersed, attacked the rear, while the rest were by a calm prevented from taking a share in the action. The British ships that were engaged were much shattered and in danger of being entirely wrecked, when a favourable wind rising, enabled the others to bear down on the enemy with force and effect, but darkness intervening prevented the battle ; and during the night the French fleet sailed away to the north-east. In this unequal contest, though the event was not decisive, two English captains were killed ; Stevens of the *Superb*, and Reynolds of the *Exeter* ; and these two ships were so much damaged, that Hughes found it necessary to proceed to Trincomale for repairs. There he expected to meet a convoy with troops and stores from England, which he intended to escort to Madras : he however found only part of the convoy ; but was joined by two seventy-four gun ships. Having refitted his squadron, he coasted southwards, and, on the 8th of April, saw the French fleet to the north-east, but at a considerable distance : in three days he arrived off the coast of Ceylon. The enemy meanwhile having gained the wind, and knowing the bay to be extremely rocky, resolved to attack the British under the disadvantage of a lee-shore and a very dangerous road ; and on the 12th of April forming their line with superior numbers, favourable wind, and situation, they prepared for the onset. The English admiral under these disadvantages arrayed his fleet ; the battle began about noon ; both sides fought with great fury ; and the French finding, notwithstanding their multiplied advantages, they could make no impression on the British, drew off their ships. Although these actions were not decisive, yet they proved very beneficial to the British. Hyder Ally had entered the Carnatic in full reliance that the naval force of France would crush the English, that thereby he should capture Madras, depose the nabob of Arcot, and place his son Tippoo in his stead. Expecting the promised and destined squadron, he had with the prospects of 1782 consoled himself for the disappointments of 1781 ; but on finding the

* Annual Register, 1783.

[Campaign against Hyder Ally. His defeat and death.]

French with so great a superiority of numbers repeatedly retiring, he began to be convinced of the vast superiority of British prowess, and to despair of accomplishing his favourite objects. The other Indian powers received the same impression in a greater degree, and became less disposed to hostilities, which they now apprehended would be ultimately unavailing.

Sir Eyre Coote's plan of the campaign was to divert Hyder's force, into detached operations, while he himself pressing on him with the main army, should oblige him to evacuate the Carnatic. Major Abingdon at the beginning of the year arrived in Tillicherry, then blockaded by a considerable part of Hyder's troops; by a bold and well conducted sally, he entirely defeated the Mysorean, and compelled him to raise the blockade and retreat from the coast. Another British detachment was stationed to protect Tanjore, to repress the designs of Hyder Ally and the French on that side of Pondicherry, and to co-operate from the south with the main army. This body, consisting of two thousand foot and two hundred and fifty horse, commanded by colonel Braithwaite, was posted on the river Coleroon; and in consequence of the recent defeat of Hyder's troops at Tillicherry, was not apprehensive that the enemy would approach the sea-coast. Tippoo Saib understanding the security of the English detachment, formed a plan for surprising and surrounding the corps, with about four hundred French and twenty thousand native troops. He was but too successful, and though the British force made the most skilful and gallant resistance, they were overpowered by numbers. The humanity of the French commander saved the remains of the British troops from being massacred by Tippoo's barbarians; but those who survived the defeat were obliged to undergo the miseries of a long and cruel imprisonment. By this disaster the southern parts of the Carnatic were exposed, and the arrival of a considerable body of French troops from the Mauritius made the state of the English more critical. These forces, joined by a numerous body from Mysore, besieged Cuddalore, and soon compelled it to capitulate; while Hyder Ally watched the motions of sir Eyre Coote. After this capture they made an attempt upon Vandiwash. Sir Eyre Coote marched to its relief, both to protect an important post, and in the hopes that Hyder Ally, trusting to the efficacy of his European auxiliaries, would hazard a battle; the Mysorean, however, cautiously avoided an engagement, and relinquishing Vandiwash, retired backwards two days march, and posted himself in a very strong situation at a place called Redhill. General Coote pursued him thither, attacked him on the 2d of June, defeated him, put his troops to the route, killed great numbers, and would have gained a much more decisive victory had he possessed cavalry to pursue the fugitives. The battle of the 2d of June obliged the enemy to retire far into the interior country, and completed the discomfiture of Hyder's designs. This aspiring adventurer, with a comprehensiveness of genius, a firmness, and magnanimity of mind, not unworthy of the highest European capacity and heroism, had projected to become master of the Indian empire; and for that purpose, to make tools of the French and native powers, in a confederacy for expelling the English, the great obstacles to the accomplishment of the lofty projects of his ambition. In the scenes of his personal enterprise, he and his European auxiliaries were counteracted and baffled by British prowess directed by the skill and abilities of a Hughes and a

[Dissolution of the Indian confederacy. Operations of sir Edward Hughes.]

Coote, while in the more distant regions of his political operations, he had to contend with the penetrating sagacity, profound and powerful genius, of a Hastings. He was already apprized of the successful efforts of the governor-general in impairing the confederacy, by reducing disaffected allies, and persuading opposing states to a separate peace. He was apprehensive that the same energetic character would finish the enmity of their powers, and that the force of Bengal, Madras, and Bombay, might ultimately be exerted against Mysore alone. These disappointments of past hopes and fears of future evils preyed on the mind of Hyder Ally, affected his health, and spread a languor over his subsequent measures and actions: he withdrew to his capital, where some months after he died. The constitution of sir Eyre Coote was so greatly affected by the fatigues which he had undergone, that he was unable to keep the field any longer; he therefore retired to Madras, leaving the command to major-general Stuart. The enemy cautiously abstaining from battle, and the British commander not being able to compel an engagement, no event of much importance happened by land during the rest of the campaign. The French fleet having refitted in the island of Ceylon, returned to the coast of Coromandel; and understanding that a re-enforcement was daily expected to join the English squadron, sailed to Negapatam before the supplies should arrive. Hughes, immediately on descrying the foe, formed his line of battle: the contest began; the enemy were thrown into disorder; several of their ships were greatly disabled, and they expected a complete defeat, when an unfavourable wind prevented the British from reaping the fruits of the victory, or retarding the retreat of the French. During the battle, a French ship of the line struck her colours, but afterwards, in defiance of the established laws of war and of nations, when the British ship trusted to the surrender of her antagonist, fired into her; and the unfavourable wind unfortunately kept the British captain from punishing the infamous treachery. Suffrein retired to Cuddalore to refit: fresh troops having arrived from France, with two more ships of the line, he with his fleet and land forces sailed to Trincomale, which they took by surprise. Both sir Eyre Coote and sir Edward Hughes were very anxious for the preservation of this important possession, and the admiral immediately sailed to its relief. A fourth naval action took place, in which the English, though still inferior in force, after a very hard fought battle, again compelled the enemy to retreat with great loss of men, and their ships very much disabled. This was the last conflict between the two fleets in the campaign of 1782.

In northern India, Mr. Hastings was successfully engaged in detaching powers from the hostile combination. Having by colonel Muir concluded a peace with Moodajee Sindia, he procured the mediation of that chieftain to negotiate a treaty with the Mahrattas, which was concluded by Mr. Anderson as envoy of the governor-general and council. The Mahrattas engaged to suffer no Europeans but the English to establish factories on their coasts; to have no intercourse with any others, except the Portuguese anciently settled in those countries, and to join in compelling the prince of Mysore to restore whatever possessions he had wrested from the English or their allies.

Sir Edward Hughes having returned to Madras, was exposed to great danger from a hurricane: fortunately his fleet escaped without loss, but much damage was suffered by mercantile ships. The larger part of the

[Expedition against Mysore. Death of sir Eyre Coote.]

crop of rice being destroyed, produced a famine which cut off great numbers of the natives; but the vigilant attention of the governor-general and the council of Calcutta tended powerfully to alleviate the calamity. There being no naval dock on the coast of Coromandel, sir Edward Hughes sailed round to Bombay, to be thoroughly repaired: there he was joined by the long expected squadron under sir Richard Bickerton. The councils of Calcutta and Bombay now freed from the Mahratta war, directed their views to Tippoo Saib, and proposed to make a powerful diversion on the Malabar coast. To enable the government of Bombay to carry on the war with vigour and effect, the supreme council sent them fifteen lacks of rupees from the treasury of Calcutta, which was now by the policy of Mr. Hastings well supplied; and, instead of wanting money for that settlement itself, was able to assist the other presidencies.

In the close of 1782, colonel Humberstown, with a considerable body of troops, was despatched to the Malabar coast; and after having made progress in the maritime parts, ventured to penetrate into the interior country, where he was repulsed with loss, closely pursued, and involved in a very dangerous situation. Tippoo Saib informed that the British commander was so far advanced, hastened after him, but Humberstown by forced marches reached Paniary, where colonel Macleod was just arrived from Madras with a body of troops. Tippoo Saib immediately followed, and invested the town, of which Macleod, as elder officer, took the command: the bravery of the British compelled Tippoo to raise the siege, and he returned with great expedition to the Carnatic. General Matthews having been sent from Bombay to the relief of colonel Humberstown, received on his way intelligence of Tippoo Saib's discomfiture and retreat. Encouraged by this information, he attacked the city of Onore; the capital of Bednore (called also Canara;) he took it by storm, nor was he able to prevent the outrages incidental to that mode of capture. Matthews penetrated into that country, took other towns and fortresses by assault, and though the detail of his operations be not accurately known, yet it would appear from the general outlines communicated to the public, that very unnecessary, and consequently very unjustifiable cruelties were committed. About this time died sir Eyre Coote, who had rendered such very important services to the British interests in India. Having found the company's fortune at Madras at the lowest ebb in 1781, he, with a very inferior force, that year effectually checked the progress of the Indian conqueror; and in the next entirely overthrew his projects. He, indeed, seconded by sir Edward Hughes, may be considered as the immediate military saviour of the Carnatic, in co-operation with Mr. Hastings, the political saviour of India.

Sir Edward Hughes arrived at Madras with his fleet in April, 1783, and on the 2d of May set sail in quest of the enemy. His strength was considerably weakened by sickness; they, however, sought an action with the enemy, who gave them battle on the 20th of June, in which the French, having the advantage of the wind, prevented a close engagement. Sir Edward Hughes returned for supplies and provisions to Madras: but before he was ready to sail again, intelligence arrived from Europe which stopped his intended operations.

Tippoo Sultan* having surprised, and by superior numbers over-

* He assumed the title of Sultan on the death of his father. See Annual Register, 1783.

[Europe. Siege and capture of Minorca]

powered Matthews's band, and retaken some of the towns which that general had captured, turned the siege of the rest into a blockade. General Stuart, now commander in the Carnatic, made it his chief object to expel the French, who were re-enforced by a fresh body of soldiers under the marquis de Bussy, and assisted by a detachment of Tippoo's troops. After he had evacuated Mysore himself with his main army, he sent colonels Long and Fullerton to invade the southern parts of Tippoo's dominions; and these commanders overran the whole Coimbatour country. The French were strongly fortified at Cuddalore; this town Stuart determined to besiege; and having spent the month of May in making preparations, he marched in the beginning of June. On the 7th, seconded admirably by all his officers and soldiers, and natives, he carried the outworks of the enemy; some days after, repulsed a very vigorous and well-conducted sally, and made such approaches as were likely to ensure success, when orders from Europe put a stop to hostilities.

The first scene of warlike operations in Europe in the year 1782, was Minorca. The Spaniards had made very great preparations to recover this ancient possession: thither were sent sixteen thousand land forces, with a train of artillery, consisting of one hundred and nine pieces of the heaviest cannon, and thirty-six great mortars. The English garrison amounted to only two thousand six hundred and ninety-two men; and the whole force of Britain was so appropriated to various services, that no addition could be spared for the relief of Minorca. The fortress was in some respects very strong, but its works were so numerous and extensive, as to require at least six thousand men for effectual defence, so that the present number was totally inadequate. Notwithstanding the vast advantage possessed by the enemy, their king endeavoured to increase it by instigating treachery; a bribe was offered to the governor, general Murray: the gallant veteran treated the attempt with the generous indignation of a man of integrity and honour, solicited to become a villain. The enemy finding their insidious proffers rejected with merited scorn, proceeded to invest St. Philip's. In August, 1781, they had cut off all communication between the fort and the country; and though there was no want of other provisions, they were debarred from supplies of vegetables. This privation was the more severely felt, as they were obliged to live on salted meats: the scurvy soon began to rage, and was accompanied by a putrid fever, which carried off great numbers of the garrison, while others were daily falling by the cannonade of the enemy. Notwithstanding these multiplied evils, the defenders displayed the utmost valour and constancy, and made several successful sallies. Though by their artillery they daily impaired the numbers of the British, the enemy employed five months in constructing their works. In the beginning of February, the garrison was so much reduced by sickness, that there were only six hundred and sixty men left who were in a degree fit for duty; and of these all but one hundred were so far tainted with the scurvy, that the physicians and surgeons declared they could hold out only a very few days before they must be sent to the hospital: they likewise affirmed, that longer perseverance in defence must prove the inevitable destruction of the remains of that brave garrison. There was, they said, no possible remedy for the sick, nor means even of keeping the greater part of them

[French convoy intercepted. Efforts of captain Jervis.]

much longer alive but by a speedy relief of wholesome air, aided by an abundant supply of vegetables. It was also apprehended that the enemy, knowing the weakness of the garrison, would now, that their works were finished, attempt to carry it by assault. From all these considerations, the governor thought it necessary to capitulate, and obtained the most honourable terms.

Meanwhile preparations were making on both sides for the naval campaign. The armaments which France, Spain, and Holland had equipped to act against Great Britain on the European seas, contained seventy ships of the line. As our force for the home service was very inferior to the fleets of the enemy if united, the object of the first importance was to prevent their junction, and weaken them by separate attacks: the second was to protect our numerous convoys, without departing so far as to leave our coasts unguarded; and the third, to relieve Gibraltar. On the 13th of April, admiral Barrington, with twelve ships of the line and several frigates, sailed towards the bay of Biscay. On the 20th, he descried a fleet, that proved to be a convoy destined for the East Indies, to supply the loss incurred by the dispersion and capture of the former transports. They had sailed from Brest only the day before, escorted by the *Protecteur* and *Pegase* of seventy-four guns, the *Actionnaire* of sixty-four, and a frigate. The British admiral having made a signal for general chase, captain Jervis of the *Foudroyant* of seventy-four guns, so far outstripped the rest during the night, that in the morning he was out of sight of the fleet. The French commander ordering the convoy to disperse, and the *Protecteur* having a large sum of money on board, it was agreed that the other two ships should keep the enemy employed, while she made the best of her way. In a short time captain Jervis overtook the *Pegase*, both ships were fresh from the harbour, and were nearly equal in force. A very fierce action ensued, in which, notwithstanding the most valiant efforts of the enemy, British seamanship and discipline so completely prevailed, as that near a hundred of the French were killed, and a much greater number wounded; though not one Briton was killed, and but very few wounded: after a conflict of an hour, the French ship surrendered. The *Pegase* being extremely disabled, captain Maitland of the *Queen* took her in charge, while the *Foudroyant* proceeded in the chase. Captain Maitland having taken three hundred of the prisoners out of the *Pegase*, sent lieutenant Bisset with a party on board to guard the rest, and take direction of the prize. Immediately after, a French ship of war appeared, which he understood to be the *Protecteur*: he ordered the lieutenant, with a cutter that was in company, to conduct the *Pegase* into an English port, while he himself, incumbered as he was with prisoners, pursued the enemy. A chase of fourteen hours brought him up with the Frenchman, when, after the first broadside, she, to his great surprise, struck her colours, and proved to be the *Actionnaire*, having on board two hundred and fifty seamen, and five hundred and fifty soldiers. The other pursuers were also successful, and took twelve ships of the convoy, having on board about a thousand soldiers. After this very successful cruise, extremely boisterous weather obliged the admiral to return to port, where he arrived in the end of the month. Captain Jervis was immediately after made a knight of the bath, an honour destined to be prelude to a more splendid mark of his sovereign's favour, earned

[The combined fleets enter the channel. Loss of the *Royal George*.]

by the exertion of the same heroic qualities on a much wider field. Intelligence being received that the Dutch fleet was preparing to come out of the Texel, lord Howe sailed with twelve ships of the line to the coast of Holland, either to intercept or confine the enemy; but finding they were not disposed to venture to the North Seas, and that the combined fleets of France and Spain had set sail, he returned to join admiral Kempenfeldt at Portsmouth. In the beginning of June, Guichen, who had been some months stationed at Cadiz, and don Louis de Cordova, sailed with twenty-five ships of the line, and in their progress northward were joined by about twenty more. With this mighty force, steering to the channel, they intercepted part of a Newfoundland convoy; but the most valuable portion, together with the escorting ships of war, escaped. The enemy being now in the mouth of the channel, great apprehensions were entertained concerning a homeward-bound fleet of merchantmen from Jamaica, protected by only three ships of the line, under sir Peter Parker. Lord Howe sailed in the beginning of July, accompanied by the admirals Barrington, sir John Lockhart Ross, and Kempenfeldt. This fleet amounted to no more than twenty-two sail of the line: therefore the object was to receive the Jamaica fleet, and baffle the attempts of the enemy, without being forced to an engagement with so very superior an armament. The abilities and professional skill of this great man, so well seconded, very dexterously and completely accomplished these purposes. The combined fleets neither intercepted our trade, nor could effect a junction with the Dutch: and, finding they could derive no advantage from continuing in the channel, retired from our coasts. The British fleet having returned to Portsmouth, an accidental calamity befell one of our ships, involving in it circumstances that caused a deep concern throughout the nation. While other ships were receiving some necessary repairs, the *Royal George*, of one hundred guns, was found to require a slight species of careen, which can be executed by laying a vessel, in a certain degree, on her side, without the trouble and delay of taking her into dock. On the 29th of August this business was undertaken; the ship was crowded with people from the shore, especially about three hundred women, besides about nine hundred of the crew. The carpenters had moved the ship a creak more on her side than was intended; when, about ten o'clock in the morning, a sudden squall arising, threw her fatally upon her side, and her gun-ports being open, and the motion of the cannon increasing the violence of the shock, she was almost instantly filled with water, and went to the bottom. The admiral, with a considerable number of his officers, and about nine hundred of the crew and visitors, perished at this melancholy moment. The *Royal George* was the largest and strongest ship in the British navy; had been the seat of command under most of our distinguished admirals, especially lord Hawke, in his celebrated battle with Confians. Admiral Kempenfeldt* was very eminent for professional science, knowledge, and judgment, and deemed unrivalled in the art of manœuvring; being besides amiable and estimable as a man, he was universally lamented.

Having protected our coasts and our trade, and prevented the junc-

* He was son to colonel Kempenfeldt, exhibited by the Spectator under the name of captain Sentry.

[Renewed operations against Gibraltar.]

tion of the Bourbon fleets with the Dutch, Britain now directed her naval attention to the relief of Gibraltar. From the surrender of Minorca, the king of Spain hoped the key of the Mediterranean would be the next acquisition. The duke de Crillon, a French nobleman, who had commanded at Minorca, undertook the supreme conduct of the siege: he was assisted by a great number of the best officers of both countries, and particularly by the most skilful engineers and artilleryists of his own. An immense increase of land and sea forces was brought both from France and Spain, to aid the troops already before Gibraltar; and many of the nobility from both countries came to serve as volunteers. The two princes of the blood-royal of France, one of them the king's own brother, the count d'Artois, sought glory by combating the brave British garrison, and its illustrious commander. In the spirit of loyalty which was then diffused through the French soldiers, the presence of their princes excited an enthusiastic desire of distinguishing themselves before so adored witnesses: the same spirit pervaded the Spaniards, and both became impatient for action. The besiegers had prepared new and extraordinary machines; battering ships which, though of an astonishing bulk, could go through all their evolutions with the ease and dexterity of frigates. Twelve hundred pieces of heavy ordnance were to play from land and sea, besides a large floating battery, and five bomb-ketches. The land and naval troops by which these operations were to be carried on, amounted to forty thousand men, besides the combined fleet of fifty ships of the line, that was to cover and support the attack. While dispositions were making for so tremendous an assault, the besiegers amused themselves with calculations of the exact time in which Gibraltar would be taken; some said the garrison would hold out twelve hours after the onset commenced; others less sanguine, thought it would last sixteen; and some, though very few, allowed even twenty-four for the completion of the conquest.*

Elliot, without precisely knowing what the inventions of the enemy were, had a general idea that their dispositions were both mighty and extraordinary, and with comprehensive wisdom and magnanimity prepared against every species of attack. Perceiving their works on the land side to be nearly completed, he determined to try how far a vigorous cannonade and bombardment with red-hot balls, carcasses, and shells, might operate to their destruction. On the 8th of September, at seven in the morning, he commenced a firing so powerful, and so admirably directed, as to commit considerable devastation on the enemy's works. Enraged at this loss, the besiegers hurried on their grand attack. On the 13th of September, this tremendous operation commenced both by sea and land; the various parts being very skilfully adjusted, their batteries appeared to have prodigious effect; their battering ships especially, so formidable for offence, during several hours seemed exquisitely adapted for defence, and invulnerable to the red-hot balls that were pouring from the garrison. The execution of these terrible instruments, though not instantaneous, was nevertheless effectual: about two o'clock, the admiral's ship was seen to issue smoke, at night she was in flames, and several others on fire; soon afterwards the conflagration was general over the battering ships, and the sole endeavours of the enemy were exerted

* Annual Register, 1782, p. 232.

[Attempted blockade. The fleet is relieved by lord Howe.]

in saving the men. The small naval force employed in the garrison of Gibraltar, was commanded by captain Curtis; that brave officer and his sailors had, in the preceding attacks from the garrison, performed very difficult and important services by land; now an opportunity occurred for exerting themselves on their own element. During the confusion and distress of the enemy hurrying from the burning battering ships, captain Curtis, with twelve gun-boats, flanked their line, raked them on one side, whilst the garrison was destroying them from another. The Spanish boats durst no longer attempt to assist the battering ships; and, when daylight appeared, the assailants who had been stationed on those were seen perishing in the flames, or, endeavouring to escape, overwhelmed by the opposite element. The British now seeing that they had completely destroyed those formidable batteries, with characteristic humanity, endeavoured to rescue the remainder of their defenders; and captain Curtis and his gallant band, through great danger to themselves, saved the lives of about four hundred. Such was the signal and complete defensive victory obtained by a comparatively small handful of heroes, over the combined efforts and united powers by sea and land, of two great, warlike, and potent nations, who, sparing no expense nor exertion of art for the attainment of a favourite object, exceeded all former examples as well in the magnitude as the formidable nature of their preparations. The enemy being so totally disappointed in their sanguine expectations of taking this fortress by assault, now rested their sole hopes on the resumption of blockade, by preventing lord Howe from bringing the expected ammunition and provisions. They professed ardently to wish for the arrival of the British fleet, and assured themselves of compensating their direful disasters by brilliant victory. On the 9th of October a violent storm dispersed the combined armament, and exposed them to imminent danger. Lord Howe having been retarded by contrary winds, did not arrive at the straits until the 11th of October; during the night a considerable part of the fleet having missed the bay of Gibraltar, entered the Mediterranean, and the next day the admiral followed to assemble the scattered ships, having left the *Buffalo* of sixty guns to collect the store-ships as they arrived in the bay, and also the *Panther* of the same force in the straits. On the 13th, the combined fleet passed the straits with about forty-seven ships of the line, three of their men of war having been disabled by the tempest, and discovered lord Howe with thirty-two ships of the line off the coast of Grenada; next morning, however, they were out of sight. The British admiral now sailing westward, sent his convoy safe into Gibraltar; it contained a re-enforcement of troops, with plentiful supplies of ammunition and provisions of every sort for the garrison. The enemy did not make their appearance until after this great object of the expedition was completely effected. On the 19th of October, when lord Howe, being joined by the *Buffalo* and *Panther*, was, with thirty-four ships, entering into the gut of Gibraltar, he descried the enemy sailing from the northeast towards the straits, with the wind blowing fair from the Mediterranean. He thought it would be extremely imprudent, with so inferior a force, to hazard an engagement in a dangerous road, well known to the enemy, but not to his fleet; he therefore proceeded to the open ocean. On the 21st of October, he descried the enemy following him at about five leagues to windward, and immediately

[Pacific disposition of the belligerent powers.]

formed a line of battle. The enemy having the wind in their favour, had their choice both of the time of action and the distance from which they should engage. At sunset the combined fleets began a cannonade, which the British returned with such effect as to produce considerable damage, and to throw their antagonists into evident confusion. The French and Spanish admirals drew off their ships about ten at night; and in the morning they were seen at a great distance, sailing away in the direction of Cadiz. Several considerations prevented lord Howe from pursuing the enemy; he had effected the principal purpose of his command in relieving Gibraltar; he had been ordered to despatch eight of his ships, after the relief of the garrison, to the West Indies: the force of the enemy was so superior as to render the issue of a battle extremely doubtful; and even if he should succeed, he was to expect his ships to be so much damaged as to disable them from proceeding to the other destined services. Lord Howe was too wise to fight merely for the sake of battle, and to incur certain danger without any definite object. He therefore proceeded to England, where, after having on his way detached part of his fleet to the West Indies, he arrived in safety with the rest. Thus in the protection of her coasts and trade, preventing the junction of the Dutch with the Bourbon fleets, and the relief of Gibraltar, Britain effected the three great objects of the campaign 1782 in Europe. In the East and West Indies the schemes of our enemies had, as we have seen, proved equally abortive. A confederacy extending from the north sea to the Mediterranean, containing the three greatest naval states, and almost all the maritime force of continental Europe, found their mighty efforts against the navy of England recoil on themselves.

The various contending parties at length began to see, that whatever partial advantages might be gained, the contest in which they were engaged tended to the general injury of all the belligerent powers. France had succeeded in separating the American colonies from Britain; but had been foiled in her principal purpose of obtaining naval and commercial supremacy. Her operations had been carried on at an enormous expense, which not only annihilated all the recent savings of her reforming economist, but infinitely exceeded her revenue, and overwhelmed her with new debt. The war which caused such unprecedented expenditure, had been far from producing any advantage likely to secure an eventual equivalent: her expectations of compensating present embarrassment, were becoming daily more hopeless. The confederacy in India was crumbling to pieces, and British superiority was again manifest: all her sanguine projects against the West Indies had fallen under the victorious arms of Rodney; and America, impoverished by her long and arduous struggle, was more likely to drain than to supply the treasure of her allies. Spain had engaged in the war as the tool of French ambition, which artfully playing on the weakness, personal prejudices, and vanity of the prince, dazzled him by splendid promises of Gibraltar and Jamaica, and thereby blinded him to his real interests, to which nothing could be more contrary than either the encouragement of revolt in American colonies, or hostilities with England. All her mighty and costly preparations against Gibraltar had fallen under Elliot's red-hot balls. From Rodney her schemes against Jamaica received a decisive defeat, her hopes of naval and commercial aggrandizement through the depression of England had

[Preliminary articles signed. Acknowledgment of American independence.]

perished, her ships had been captured and her fleets overthrown. In four years, all her extraordinary exertions, all her waste of blood and treasure had conquered a defenceless province,* and captured a hospital.† America had succeeded in the contest, and attained the objects for which she fought; but she prevailed by efforts which drained her resources, by labours that required a respite as soon as it could be procured consistently with her public engagements. During her short warfare, Holland, in the loss of her settlements, the seizure of her treasures, and the destruction of her trade, learned how dangerous it is for a state deriving its subsistence from commerce, to provoke to war a neighbour that rules the ocean. Britain for the last five years had been engaged in a war to defend her maritime sovereignty; great as had been her collateral losses, she had on the whole maintained that grand object; but her defence, though manifesting her energy, had drained her resources: her expenditure was enormous, her debts and taxes had far exceeded the anticipation of even her most desponding politicians; trade was interrupted, difficulties and distress poignant and alarming; increasing demands appeared to portend the derangement of her finances, and the downfall of her credit. From all these circumstances it was the interest of each party separately, and all jointly, to conciliate peace.

The determination lately avowed by England to acknowledge the independence of America, removed the most ostensive obstacle to an accommodation, as the discomfiture of their designs dispelled the real objections of our European enemies. The empress of Russia and emperor of Germany, finding a pacificatory disposition in the belligerent powers, and that circumstances now admitted of its being carried into effect, offered themselves, and were accepted as mediators. Soon after lord Shelburne became prime minister, the British government had sent Mr. William Windham Grenville, brother to the earl of Temple, to Paris, to pave the way for opening a negotiation in the proper form. These preliminaries being settled, Mr. Fitzherbert, envoy at Brussels, was appointed plenipotentiary to negotiate and conclude a peace with the ministers of France, Spain, and Holland. He accordingly proceeded to Paris in the beginning of November; Mr. Oswald, a merchant, was likewise despatched to the French metropolis as commissioner from his Britannic majesty, for treating of peace with John Adams, Benjamin Franklin, John Jay, and Henry Laurens, four of the commissioners nominated for the same purpose on the part of the United States of America. On the 30th of November, provisional articles were signed as the grounds of future peace: by this treaty, the freedom, sovereignty, and independence of the thirteen United States was individually, by name, and in the fullest and most express terms, acknowledged, and every claim to their government, property, and territorial rights for ever relinquished by the crown of Britain. To prevent all future disputes about boundaries, several lines were drawn, which it is unnecessary to follow with geographical minuteness; it is sufficient to say that Britain retained Canada and Nova Scotia; and acknowledged all the territory southwards to Georgia inclusive, westward to the Ohio and Mississippi, and eastwards to the Atlantic Ocean to be independent: to the United States, so defined, she granted

* West Florida.

† Minorca.

[Treaties between Britain and the respective powers.]

an unlimited right of fishery on the banks of Newfoundland, in the Gulf of St. Lawrence, and all other places where both nations had heretofore been accustomed to fish. American creditors were to recover fair debts in sterling money: congress engaged to recommend to the legislatures to restore all estates, rights, and properties, belonging to real British subjects, which had been confiscated; also of other loyalists who had not borne arms against the United States, and to treat with mildness all descriptions of loyalists. Congress farther engaged, that after the conclusion of the treaty, there should be no future confiscations, or prosecutions for having joined the British.

By the treaty with France, England extended the privilege of the French to fish on the banks of Newfoundland, and likewise ceded the islands of St. Pierre and Miquelon in full right to France, and consequently without any restriction in point of fortification. In the West Indies, England restored to France the island of St. Lucia; and ceded and guaranteed to her the island of Tobago. On the other hand France restored to Britain, the island of Grenada, and the Grenadines, with St. Vincent's, Dominica, St. Christopher's, Nevis, and Montserrat. In Africa, England ceded to France the river of Senegal, with the forts and dependencies; and also the island of Goree. France guaranteed to England the river Gambia, and Fort St. James. In India, England restored her acquisitions during the war; in return for which France, having made no conquest, could not give an equivalent in that country, and none was required in any other. In Europe, England agreed to the abrogation and suppression of all the articles relative to Dunkirk, from the treaty of peace concluded at Utrecht, in 1713, inclusively to the present time.

By the treaty with Spain, Great Britain ceded not only Minorca and West Florida, but also East Florida; and Spain on her part restored to Britain the Bahama Islands. The preliminaries between Britain and Holland were not immediately signed, but until these should be adjusted a suspension of arms was established. It was afterwards agreed that, with regard to the honours of the flag, the same custom should be respectively followed as was practised before the war; the captured ships from each nation should be restored; and there should be a general restoration of all places taken, except Negapatam, which was to continue in possession of his Britannic majesty, until the Dutch should offer an equivalent. The Dutch engaged not to obstruct the navigation of British subjects on the eastern seas; and whereas disputes had arisen between the African companies of the respective nations, it was agreed these should be referred to commissioners.

The preliminaries between Britain, France, and America, were signed on or before the 21st of January, 1783; and as an armistice, soon after followed by a treaty of peace, was at the same time established between Britain and Holland, we may from this time consider the war as finished.

Thus ended the American war; in which all the nations that contended, however potent their exertions, or brilliant their several successes, yet were very great sufferers by the events. The American colonies, indeed, so far succeeded in their object, as to render themselves an independent and separate community. The real advantage to accrue from this dismemberment was problematical and contingent; to depend upon

[General view of this arduous contest.]

not only physical and moral causes, of which the operation and effect might be doubtful, but on a variety of circumstances and incidents which could not possibly be foreseen. One fact they could experimentally ascertain: their revolutionary efforts had impoverished, devastated, and unpeopled the country. This was a notorious and glaring evil, present, seen, and felt, the good was doubtful, and hitherto to be found only in anticipatory imagination. Waving the question of abstract right, and considering only expediency, concerning the resistance of the Americans situated as they had been relatively to the mother country; policy and prudence could justify their repugnance to the acts of the British government, only on the supposition that these tended to change their former happy situation, and to deprive them of their rights as freemen, and British subjects. In this case, refusal to comply would not be a measure of choice, but to generous and magnanimous minds a dictate of necessity. There not only might be, but were many who conceived the Americans driven to hostilities at first, yet censured the unaccommodating spirit which refused the proffers of returning amity; and lamented the separation between children of the same origin. Britain was a greater loser by this contest than by any in which she had ever been engaged: thirteen provinces, before the unhappy dispute, rapidly increasing not only their own prosperity, but the individual and national wealth, the defensive and offensive force of the parent state, were severed from it for ever. Through her quarrel with America, Britain had been involved in a complication of the most expensive and formidable wars; and a few years, nearly doubling her burthens, almost equalled the cost of a century. So far were these enormous sums from being expended in the reasonable hope of future indemnification, that they were a sacrifice of a great part of the public capital to preserve the existence of the British nation. Heretofore Britain had fought for victory, now she contended for bare life; but all her dangers, difficulties, and distresses from the European confederacy had their origin in the contest with the American colonies; and here impartial history, without either impugning or supporting the alleged right of the Americans to tax themselves, justifying or condemning the policy of the principle and mode of asserting that right, must exhibit one general series of facts, tending to impeach the wisdom of British counsels; *every coercive measure, from the stamp act downwards, produced a directly contrary effect to that which its abettors sought and proposed.* The only soothing and conciliatory schemes adopted before the rupture, the plans of the marquis of Rockingham and lord North, in 1766 and 1770, in a great degree removed the evils which projects of imperious exaction had generated through most of the colonies; they restored the harmony which imperious dictation had disturbed; and the repeal of imposts reproduced that revenue which attempted taxation destroyed. Thus experience the most recent afforded strong reasons to conclude, that, to preserve the attachment of America, and profit by her industry, prosperity, and riches, the imposition of taxes must be laid aside. Strong, and general, and uniform, as the colonial expression of repugnance to taxation had been, and was, the British ministers conceived a notion that it was confined to the influence of a few factious demagogues: * such reports, indeed, they re-

* See this volume, *passim*.

[Impartial estimate of ministerial policy.]

ceived from their own partial and interested adherents; on these they acted in the face of the plainest evidence of universal association; which to abhorrence of British taxation sacrificed every predilection of taste and habit for British commodities; and manifested individual, corporate, and confederate reprobation, both in word and deed, of pecuniary contribution without their own consent. Ministers still thought that the majority of the colonies was favourable to British impost. And here it must be admitted, that the abettors of the project as a scheme of beneficial policy, with the means of being thoroughly informed, were really ignorant of the state of the case concerning which they professed to reason and to plan. Originating in misapprehension, their conclusions were false, and their measures unwise and pernicious. The most partial admirers of lord North's administration would find it impossible to prove, or even plausibly to contend, that his schemes respecting America were founded in adequate knowledge, just deduction, or wise policy. But his enemies on the other hand must allow, though the propositions might be his, the enactment belonged to the whole legislature. The same imperfect information that marked the senatorial motions of ministers affected also their executorial plans and directions. In addition to their favourite theory of the general attachment of the Americans to British supremacy, they adopted another hypothesis, that the colonists were cowards. On this speculation they formed their military arrangements, and to repress hostile resistance sent a very inadequate force. Their tardy projects of partial conciliation, and retained coercion, encouraged colonial confidence, without removing disaffection and resentment.

When war was inevitable, or at least could be avoided but by such concessions only as they deemed it incompatible with honour and duty to grant, its management became the object of consideration. Here the censure bestowed upon ministry so lavishly, after the first campaign, admits considerable modifications. The armies sent, and generals employed, afforded a moral probability of success. Sir William Howe was a man of high military character; nor was it possible for government to select an officer from whom all ranks and parties could entertain more sanguine expectations. The troops in number, kind, and strength, were such as any statesman, reasoning from general principles and experience, compared with the hostile force, might very fairly infer to be adequate to the purpose. If the event of Howe's command proved very different, the detailed narrative must have shown that it arose from causes not all chargeable on ministers. The substitution of Burgoyne in the place of Carleton was a preference which had no foundation in their respective military characters. Whatever Burgoyne's talents might be, Carleton's opportunities of exertion, especially in that country, had been greater, and were crowned with success. The disasters of Burgoyne may certainly be charged, in a considerable degree, to the American minister, whether the failure was in the plan or the execution. Indeed the design of penetrating into Albany appeared to arise from a very general source of miscarriage in all the British schemes respecting America,—unfounded hopes of loyal co-operation. On the return of sir William Howe, the appointment of sir Henry Clinton was a measure that appeared fair and reasonable according to the usual course of military promotion. His character as an officer was unobjectionable, and he had been second in command.

[The great resources of Britain manifested by the war.]

He was brave, perfectly acquainted with the details of tactical evolution, and the routine of military duty. How far he had genius adequate to the great and comprehensive schemes, rapid invention, and energetic operation, requisite in a commander in chief on a momentous service, may be fairly questioned. He certainly, on a very important occasion,* manifested a want of that sagacity which, penetrating the design of an antagonist, can anticipate and disconcert his plans, and baffle his efforts. Though prescription might point to Clinton as a successor to Howe, reason would have conferred the command upon lord Cornwallis. When war commenced with the house of Bourbon, the primary object of Britain was her navy. The conduct of this department, though branded by opposition with every reproachful epithet, whether considered in particular detail, or general result, appears not to deserve such unqualified censure. The great and broad fact is, the house of Bourbon directed their chief efforts to naval operations, and were joined both by recent subjects and former allies of Britain; yet all this confederated force could obtain no superiority over the navy of England. The fleet first furnished against France, equal in number, and consequently, according to the estimate of uniform experience, a match for the enemy, and the commander employed high in professional reputation, afforded well grounded expectations of success. The disappointment which ensued could not be imputed to the want of a sufficiently powerful force. The escape of the French armament probably brought on the Spanish, and afterwards the Dutch war; and though in some particular instances trade might have been better protected, and certain warlike operations might have been more seasonably conducted, yet in general the commanders employed, and the armaments equipped, were adequate to the purposes of defence and protection, which against such a host of foes, was nearly the whole that could be expected.

In the conduct of the war, neither military or naval plans, operations, or results, were so deserving of blame or regret, as the enormous profusion of the public money. If indeed we compare the expense, not with result of operations, but with the true measure, the means required and exerted, the end sought and attained, we find the excess of public money expended beyond public service done, to have been so enormous, as to afford probable grounds of suspecting, that the minister employed corrupt donative to purchase that parliamentary influence which he could not command by his abilities. Great however as were the burthens entailed upon Britain by the American war, the efforts which she exhibited when urged by necessity, manifested the extent and depth of her resources, the ability, skill, and valour of her national defenders, and the force of her national character. The American war, in its origin, was unwise; in its conduct of a very mixed character; in its progress, frequently disastrous; in its result, injurious, but not dishonourable. The struggles to ward off calamity, the exertions to defend independence, manifested qualities, which, under wise direction and more invigorating energy, were fitted and destined not only to restore the national power and splendour, but to extend it far beyond the most glorious experience.

* See this volume, p. 598.

[Consequences proximate and eventual to both parties.]

Holland, misled by a French faction to provoke war with a view of increasing her commerce, far from succeeding in her object, was deprived both of her actual trade, and a great portion of its former gains. When, according to her mercantile character, she struck a balance, she found the whole war account to be loss.

Spain, in the midst of silver and gold, poor, because void of industry, with every natural advantage of situation, soil, and climate, and the adventitious profits from her colonial possessions, being in that condition of dependence on her inventive and energetic neighbour, which indolence, listlessness, and inaction, in nations as well as individuals, must yield to ingenuity, activity, and enterprise; was by the war loaded with debts, to her overwhelming, because she had not in her character and spirit the means of extrication.

But the most momentous evils of the American war have been experienced by France. That great and powerful nation has ever been a sufferer by wars with England: whatever special causes may have at different periods embroiled the two mightiest states of modern history, in the union of resources and character; the general principle on the side of the French has been maritime and commercial competition. In every one of these wars she has been disappointed, her existing navy and commerce impaired, and her naval and commercial resources diminished; the exertions intended to injure Britain failed: whereas, equal efforts of that ability and energy which she possesses in so eminent a degree, if employed in the peaceable improvement of her various resources, without wasteful expenditure, would have produced the commerce and opulence which she in vain sought by burthensome and ruinous wars. When at peace with England, she has flourished; when attempting by war to achieve maritime superiority, she was discomfited, and not only expended the treasure of past peaceful industry, but anticipated future gains. Experience might have taught her, that the attempt to be the first in naval power could never be successful. Reflection might have convinced her, that without maritime supremacy, she from her situation and character, might possess such an extent of commerce as would fully employ that department of national industry, and a sufficient naval force to protect it against the whole world, if she did not interfere with England. If she were susceptible of instruction from the lessons of experience, never could the hopelessness of seeking naval supremacy be more strongly impressed on her than by the American war. Never had Britain fought with so many disadvantages and impediments, yet she had retained the empire of the sea. The history, both of Spain and her own country, might have taught France the certain loss accruing to the maritime states from a contest with England. Provoking the naval efforts of this kingdom, Philip wasted much of that strength which had descended to his dominions from Charles V. and left his successors an easy prey to the efforts of France, who was then at peace with England, and exerted her forces where she was prepollent. Louis XIV. had rendered himself dictator of Europe, until he ventured a naval contest with England. La Hogue avenged Rocroi and the Downs: the victories of Condé and Turenne paved the way to Louis for governing the christian world by his armies, if his fleets had avoided an encounter with Russel. As a naval war had always been injurious to France, her extraordinary efforts in that which was just ended, exhausted her trea-

[American war accelerates the fall of the French monarchy.]

sury, and deranged her finances much more than was immediately suspected; but fiscal embarrassments, great as they were, proved eventually only instrumental to much more formidable evils which accrued to France from the part that she acted in the American war. The principles which intercourse with American republicanism nourished were much more mischievous to the French monarchy, than all the expenses and losses which she had incurred, and, co-operating with doctrines before industriously spread, had a powerful efficacy in overturning the established constitution. The fall of the French monarchy, aristocracy, and hierarchy, if not caused, was rapidly accelerated by the American war.

CHAP. XXX.


Administration of lord Shelburne—deficient in strength—State of political parties.—Meeting of parliament.—Unusual length and particularity of his majesty's speech.—Mr. Fox details the reasons of his own resignation.—His party and lord North's concur in censuring ministers—their attacks indicate a concert of counsels—both reprobate the peace.—Ministers defend the peace as necessary in the exhausted state of our navy, army, and finances—and the terms the best that could be attained.—Famous coalition of lord North and Mr. Fox.—The coalition considered relatively to its leaders.—Vote of censure passed against ministers.—Great clamour against the coalition.—Ministers resign.—Ministerial interregnum.—The coalition come into office.—Duke of Portland first lord of the treasury.—Lord North and Mr. Fox secretaries of state.—Revival of commerce with America.—Mr. William Pitt proposes a specific plan of parliamentary reform.—Motion of the duke of Richmond respecting the great seal—combated by lord Loughborough.—Minute economical regulations.—George, prince of Wales—abilities and opening character—a separate establishment appointed for his highness.—India affairs—committee continues its investigations.—From the mass of evidence Mr. Dundas exhibits a comprehensive statement of the situation of affairs, and of executorial conduct—proposes a bill for the regulation of British India—for the present postpones his plan.—Indian affairs first displayed the force and extent of Mr. Dundas's talents—which were before but partially known and comprehended.—Supplies.—New taxes.—Internal state of Britain at the peace.—Continental occurrences.

FROM the resignation of Mr. Fox and the adherents of the marquis of Rockingham, the classes which, though differing in certain opinions, had coincided in opposition to lord North's ministry, were now conceived to have become inimical parties. Lord Shelburne, the prime minister, was a man of considerable political knowledge, and particularly distinguished for his minute and detailed acquaintance with foreign affairs. He was, however, more noted for extent and exactness of intelligence, than for the formation of able and beneficial plans from the result. He was, therefore, perhaps, less fitted for the supreme management in so trying and critical a situation, than for some secondary department, in which, from his abundant stores, he might have supplied materials for the operation of more energetic and less experienced genius. In that view had he continued a member of the cabinet of which Mr. Fox was really the head, there is little doubt Britain would have possessed a ministry that, whatever its character might have been in other respects, at least would not have failed in efficacy. Lord Shelburne had attached himself to the illustrious Chatham, and after his decease was considered as the leader of his friends and connexions, but did not greatly increase the number by his own personal influence. Far from overbearing party by genius like Chatham, he was not, like many other ministers, propped up by a confederacy. Lord Camden, lord Temple, and Mr. Dunning (now lord Ashburton,) joined rather than followed Shelburne; lord Thurlow and Mr. Dundas took the same side, but to support government, more than from any approbation of its present chief minister. Mr. Dundas indeed had taken a grand and com-

[State of political parties. Parliament.]

prehensive view both of the country and political characters; reduced to distress by the timidity and weakness of mature years, Britain he conceived must seek restoration from youthful wisdom. He very early supposed Mr. Pitt to be the man who must save his country as prime minister: Mr. Pitt himself was officially joined with lord Shelburne, but appears to have attended to the duties of his own department without entering into any party projects and intrigues. Neither the number of those who supported the minister, nor the motives by which some of them were actuated, afforded a probability of permanency to lord Shelburne's administration. There were two other parties, both powerful and well compacted. The benevolent disposition and social qualities, the brilliant wit, pleasing humour, and engaging manners of lord North, had co-operated with political motives in attaching great numbers to his person and interests. No man had exerted himself more uniformly and effectually to serve his friends, and though not from all, he from many experienced that gratitude which was so pleasing to his benignant and affectionate heart. His party no longer possessed the masculine force of Thurlow, the close, powerful, and direct efforts of Dundas; nevertheless in lords Stormont and Carlisle, lord Loughborough and lord Mansfield, Messrs. Courtney, Anstruther, Adam, and Eden, and lord North himself, besides many others of respectable talents, he retained a formidable host of political strength. A less numerous, but still stronger and better compacted body, was that which the philosophic genius of Burke guided and instructed, the rapid and powerful energy of Fox invigorated and led: here shone deliberative and judicial eloquence in their most brilliant lustre; here even Messrs. Erskine and Sheridan acted only second parts. There was besides this constellation of talent, the weight and interest of the whig aristocracy. Lord Shelburne was conscious that, without some accession of political strength, he would be incapable of retaining his situation, and despaired of a reunion with those from whom he had so lately separated; he therefore made overtures to the party which he had uniformly opposed. Mr. Pitt candidly bestowed a just tribute of praise on lord North, but declared his determination never to be a member of a ministry in which that statesman should bear a part. It may indeed be fairly inferred from the conduct of Mr. Pitt, that he thought it wiser to stand upon political talents and character, than to seek the props of coalitions and combinations. The intrinsic strength of lord Shelburne, however, was not so great as to preclude the necessity of extrinsic aid; the application therefore in him was commensurate in prudence with the desire of continuance in office, but it proved unavailing. Various reports were now spread concerning the intentions of both the respective parties and individual members, and all eyes were turned to the approaching meeting of parliament, wherein it was expected that the several objects and designs would be unfolded.

On the 5th of December, 1782, his majesty opened the session in a speech of very great length, and comprehending an unusual extent, variety, and particularity of political disquisition. The introduction stated, that since the close of the last session, his majesty had been constantly employed in the care and attention which the important and critical conjuncture of affairs required; he had put an end to the prosecution of offensive war in America, and had entered into provisional articles for declaring the colonies independent. "In thus (his majesty said) admitting



[Mr. Fox details the reasons of his late resignation.]

their separation from the crown of these kingdoms, I have sacrificed every consideration of my own to the wishes and opinion of my people. I make it my humble and earnest prayer to Almighty God, that Great Britain may not feel the evils which might result from so great a dismemberment of the empire, and that America may be free from those calamities which have formerly proved, in the mother country, how essential monarchy is to the enjoyment of constitutional liberty. He went over the principal operations of the campaign, and bestowed the merited praise on the defence of Gibraltar, and other glorious and beneficial efforts. He mentioned the advanced state of the negotiations for peace, at the same time the necessity of being prepared, lest from any unforeseen cause they might be frustrated. To the house of commons he particularised a variety of economical regulations in the expenditure of the army and the civil list, and other reductions: and recommended to parliament an attention to the price of corn, that year unusually high. He extolled the liberality with which the rights and commerce of Ireland had been established, and advised a revision of our whole trading system upon the same comprehensive principles; and, lastly, urged some fundamental regulations of our Asiatic territories. Though no opposition was made to the address in either house, yet severe animadversions were passed upon the speech in both. The recognition of American independence was censured upon two very opposite grounds. By the supporters of lord North it was severely condemned as having done much more than was necessary; and by Mr. Fox's party, as not having done enough. Lord Stormont reprobated an unqualified surrender of the whole, without obtaining a truce, or even a cessation of hostilities, as the price of so lavish a concession. In the most abject and unfortunate reign that Spain ever knew (that of Philip III.) the negotiators of that prince retained ten out of seventeen of the revolted provinces, and detached the rest from their alliance with France; yet by Britain the whole had been conceded, without any attempt to procure more favourable terms. Mr. Fox censured ministers for having made the independence of America conditionally to depend on a conclusion of a peace with France, instead of being absolute. A dispute on this subject, he informed the house, was one of the reasons which had compelled him to resign his late office. It had been uniformly his opinion, that the unconditional recognition of independence was the interest of Britain, because such an acknowledgment would dispose America to end the war as speedily as possible, and would tend essentially to accelerate a general peace. Finding himself outvoted in the cabinet on this question, he had thought it his duty to quit his situation. Mr. Fox's explanation of his reasons for retiring from office were by no means satisfactory to the public; it was not considered as the part of a patriot to withdraw himself from the service of his country, merely because a measure proposed by him was not adopted; it was conceived that his extraordinary abilities, employed in the cabinet, might have rendered essential service to his country, whether the recognition of American independence were conditional or absolute. The real motives of his conduct were very generally construed to be dissatisfaction with the appointment of lord Shelburne to that office which he wished to be held by a distinguished member of the whig party.

Until the recess, the attention of both houses was chiefly employed in motions for the production of papers respecting the negotiation, which

[Concurs with lord North in reprobating the peace. Defence of ministers.]

were negatived on the ground of being premature until the treaty should be brought to a close.

Parliament met after the Christmas holidays, on the 21st of January, 1783 : the preliminary articles of peace between Great Britain and France having been signed at Versailles, were laid before legislature on the 27th of January, and the 17th of February was appointed for taking them into consideration. Lord North and Mr. Fox had both very frequently censured administration: their animadversions had arisen from professedly different principles : there had been no appearance of concert either in their attacks upon ministers or any other measures. The discussion of the peace manifested a systematic regularity of procedure, a selection of parts in the debate, and a concurrence of principles of reasoning and of particular arguments, which were too striking to be the result of accident, and obviously intimating a concert between two parties so long totally inimical to each other. Mr. Thomas Pitt moved an address to his majesty, expressing a high approbation of the peace. Lord John Cavendish, as speaker for the whig party, proposed an amendment, which should contain no opinion on the merit of the peace, but declare their resolution to bestow on it that serious and full attention which the importance of the subject deserved; but pledge themselves, whatever conclusion they might draw from the investigation of the terms, that they should invariably adhere to the articles which his majesty had stipulated. Lord North moved a second amendment, expressive of the regard due from the nation to the loyalists who had suffered so much in supporting the cause of Great Britain. The ministerial speakers defended the peace; first, as necessary in the circumstances of the country; and, secondly, as favourable in point of terms. Our finances, our navy, and our army, they contended, were in so deplorable a state as to render the continuance of the war ruinous. To maintain this position respecting pecuniary resources, they entered into a detailed account of incumbrances and expenditure. The national debt, funded and unfunded, amounted to upwards of two hundred and fifty millions. The annual interest, together with the necessary expense of a peace establishment, was fully equal to all the revenue which the people, groaning already under the load of taxes, could afford. Our navy, so far from being adequate to the purposes of offensive competition with the combined fleets of Europe, was scarcely sufficient for effectual defence. Our fleet did not exceed a hundred sail of the line, while the armaments of France, Spain, and Holland, amounted to a hundred and seventy sail of the line. By continuing merely defensive war we could gain nothing, and consequently could not expect by another campaign to obtain a better peace. The army was still more inferior to the armies of our enemies, and totally inadequate to farther contest. These general positions they illustrated by a detailed account of our force in various parts of the world. Our most brilliant successes had been merely defensive, and only enabled us to retard the progress of the enemy. From this view of total inability to engage in another campaign with a prospect of bringing it to a more favourable conclusion, it was argued, that peace, on any terms, would break the powerful confederacy, and give us time to recruit our wasted strength; and therefore was preferable to a continuance of the war. But it was further contended, that the conditions of the peace were advantageous. One of the chief objections to the treaty was the participation allowed the French

[Famous coalition of lord North and Mr. Fox.]

in the Newfoundland fishery; but this, called by opposition a cession, was by ministers argued to be only the definition and limitation of a right which always had been exercised by France, and formerly, from being indefinite, was the source of perpetual contention. The space to which France was now limited, was very inconsiderable both in extent and productiveness in comparison of the coast which Britain possessed. The islands of St. Pierre and Miquelon, ceded to France, were only a restitution of what had belonged to her before the preceding war; and so far were these places from admitting fortifications that could annoy our fishery in a future war, the most skilful engineers had certified, that neither island would admit the construction of a fortress which could stand the attack of the smallest of our frigates. During the detail of the various cessions in the West, Africa, and the East Indies, they endeavoured to prove that they were really of little importance. The articles of the treaty of Utrecht, respecting Dunkirk, had never been enforced, and were not now designed to be executed: their abrogation therefore could not be detrimental to England. France desired their suppression as a point of honour: and by compliance we gratified the other party, without incurring any loss ourselves. East and West Florida and Minorca, which were now yielded to Spain, had already cost this country much more than they brought, and were besides balanced by the restitution of the Bahama islands and Providence. The article most strongly censured was, the terms procured for the loyalists. In answer to those, it was said, that congress was invested with no power over the property of the several states: a recommendation to the provincial assemblies was all which their constitutional authority permitted them to undertake; but whatever weight could be justly allowed to any of the objections against the concessions, the supporters of the peace contended, that either severally or jointly, they were of no moment when balanced with the evils of continuing the war. Having endeavoured to defend the peace, both on the grounds of general expediency and particular conditions, they next proceeded to the motives of their opponents; they asserted, that an union of professed tories and professed whigs, who for so many years had been abusing and reviling each other, must arise from some different reason than mutual agreement of political opinion. The following was the account which they gave of this unexpected confederation: lord North's party had long experienced the advantages of office, but at the same time had been exposed to the forcible attacks of Mr. Fox, and the whig confederacy of which he had become a member; they now sought to regain the benefits without suffering the annoyance; Mr. Fox and his coadjutors conceived that their favourite plan of governing by a combination was more certainly practicable by extending its objects; and both parties found it expedient to sacrifice all animosity and professed reprobation to reciprocal interest; the peace was merely a pretext for joining the parties, in order to force their way into administration. The event so far justified this interpretation, that the new confederacy outvoted ministers. and the amendments were carried in the house of commons by a considerable majority.

When this coalition was reported abroad, it was first received with a mixture of doubt and astonishment. Many of the sanguine admirers of Mr. Fox, who had been accustomed to receive his orations, not merely as effusions of genius, but as oracles of truth, conceived lord North to

[Considered relatively to its leaders and objects.]

be as bad, as malignant, and diabolical, as Mr. Fox, in the rapidity of invention, prompted by passion, and borne away by fancy, chose to represent his antagonist. These could not at first believe that he associated with a man whom he taught them to consider as a weak and wicked minister; but when they found that a coalition had taken place, they turned against the late object of their idolatry, a resentment proportioned to their recent adoration. Discerning and impartial men, estimating the merits of a coalition in such circumstances, laid little stress on the violent expressions which, in the paroxysms of impassioned eloquence, Mr. Fox had employed; but they examined the history of his planned and deliberative proceedings. The principal points of difference between lord North and Mr. Fox were not speculative opinions, but practical conduct. He had for a series of years declared the measures and policy of lord North to be such as to demonstrate incapacity, corruption, profligacy, and every quality in a minister that was ruinous to the country over which he presided. He had not confined himself to imputation of folly and weakness, but had alleged the highest criminality. With lord North, whom in 1782, he had declared deserving of death for the wickedness of his administration, Mr. Fox, in 1783, declared himself ready to co-operate in administration. If Mr. Fox represented lord North as the weakest and blackest of men, believing him to be otherwise, what confidence was to be reposed in any of his future declarations? If he before believed him to be so bad as he represented, what had happened in that short time to change his opinion? What had lord North done when out of office to approve himself to Mr. Fox fit for being minister, when, in office, declared by him to be fit only for the block? These were questions which impartial men naturally asked, in order to determine how far it was proper to receive the professions of Mr. Fox. Equal blame was by no means attached to lord North; he had never declared any opinion against the political talents or character of Mr. Fox. There was, therefore, no inconsistency in coalescing with him as a statesman, provided the objects to be sought, and the means to be employed by that combination, were meritorious; and these soon appeared, though not in their full extent. A very short time manifested the intention of the coalition to be, through their paramount influence in the house of commons, to dictate to his majesty the choice of ministers, which is left by the constitution of the country to his own discretion. This purpose was much more incompatible with the long professed principles of lord North, than with the recent principles and doctrines of Mr. Fox. Indeed, lord North and Mr. Fox, able as they were by nature, and conversant from experience and situation in the politics of the country, appeared to have considered the constitution partially rather than completely. They could neither be said to be supporters of the whole system, nor of the balances on which its perfection depends. Lord North was a partisan of the monarchical, and Mr. Fox of the popular, department. The former, however, now joined with the latter in extending the power of the commons, by reducing the power of the crown. Thus a coalition with lord North, FOR ANY PURPOSE TO BE EFFECTED BY POLITICAL ABILITIES AND INTEGRITY, was totally inconsistent with the very often repeated professions of Mr. Fox. *This specific object of the coalition was no less incompatible with the uniformly declared principles of lord North.* Mr. Fox could not, consistently, coalesce with lord North as a statesman; lord

[Grand views of Mr. Fox on public credit. Vote of censure on ministers.]

North could not, consistently, coalesce with any man to reduce the kingly prerogative.

Having rejected the motion for approving the peace, the coalition party next proceeded to a positive censure. On the 21st of February, it was moved, that the concessions granted by the peace to the enemies of Britain, were greater than either the actual situation of their respective possessions, or their comparative strength, entitled them to receive. In support of this proposition they followed the order of their adversaries, and endeavoured to prove by detailed accounts, that the finances, the army, and navy, were not in the reduced state alleged by ministers; that the concessions were much more important than they pretended; and also, that they might have been prevented. In speaking on our financial situation, Mr. Fox, with great force and effect, exposed the absurdity of economists supposing specific limits to our national credit. "Speculative politicians (he said) have in all times been fond of circumscribing the bounds of public credit, and drawing a line beyond which they imagine it cannot be stretched; but repeated experience has shown, that such ideas are, for the most part, imaginary and chimerical. National credit is relative to the result of private and public ability and industry. It is impossible, therefore, to fix the line beyond which it cannot extend, without, at the same time, marking the bounds of that ability and industry." The navy Mr. Fox declared to be in a flourishing state, and to have been competent in the late campaign to every purpose of offence and defence. It was, however, the same that had been equipped under lord Sandwich: and for the ruinous state of which this orator had attacked the first lord of the admiralty, the year before, with such bitter severity. His general arguments against the present ministry proceeded on an assumption, that our resources were in a flourishing state: we certainly were neither richer nor stronger within the last ten months; his reasoning, therefore, contained a virtual admission, that his charges against the former ministry of having utterly ruined the country, were totally unfounded. Mr. Fox displayed skilful dexterity in his defence of the coalition: he kept aloof from the principles and objects of the present combination, and exerted his eloquence in impressing a general position, that union between individuals and parties formerly inimical, was often meritorious; and that such junctions frequently had been effected in this country, to the very great advantage of the nation. Impartial observers saw that the obvious truth of this general assertion proved nothing respecting the merit or demerit of this particular coalition. The question being called for, the motion for censuring ministry was carried in the affirmative, by a majority of two hundred and twenty-four to two hundred and eight. In the house of lords a similar proposition was negatived.

In consequence of the censure of the commons, lord Shelburne resigned his office. The chancellor of the exchequer declared publicly in the house that he only held his place until a successor should be appointed. During the whole month of March there was a ministerial interregnum: the reasons which the one side alleged for this delay were the mutual jealousy that still subsisted between the coalesced parties, and the difficulties which they found in adjusting their several pretensions; others asserted that the court wished to retain the abilities of the lord-chancellor, and that Mr. Fox's party insisted on the exclusion of that illustrious character. The adherents of the coalition professed to think that

[Ministerial interregnum. The coalition come into office.]

the sovereign was endeavouring to use his own prerogative, by forming a ministry without regard to the newly established connexion. During this time the kingdom was without any responsible government; with the finances neglected, the military establishments unreduced, and the negotiations with foreign powers, which the critical conjuncture of affairs rendered peculiarly important, entirely at a stand. During this interval, various inquiries were made in the house concerning pensions which had been recently granted. On discussing the particulars, however, the coalition members found that no plausible objections could be maintained to the several grants of the late ministers. Mr. Coke, member from Norfolk, gave notice that he meant in the course of the following week to move an address to his majesty to urge the formation of a new ministry. The king ordered the duke of Portland and lord North to lay before him a sketch of their proposed arrangements; but nothing conclusive having been determined, Mr. Coke, on the 24th, made the promised motion, in the discussion of which there was a considerable degree of personal invective. The opposite party, comprehending several independent country gentlemen, attacked the coalition. One gentleman proposed to add to the address, the exclusion of all those who had been comprised in Mr. Fox's motion in the former year, declaring the incapacity of his present associates; "that his majesty should please not to nominate or appoint any person or persons to fill up the vacant departments, *who by their mismanagement of public affairs, and want of foresight and abilities, when they were in office, had lost the confidence of the people.*"* The coalition retorted these sarcastic attacks, by repeating the vote of censure on the late ministry; they also revived the charges against secret advisers of the crown. To these Mr. Fox imputed the delay in forming the new administration; and became so pointedly personal, as to call up Mr. Jenkinson, who acknowledged that he had been in conference with the king more than once: as a privy-counsellor, he was bound to give his advice when asked; he had done so to the best of his judgment, but never had obtruded his counsel. The proposed address was carried; and his majesty answered, that his earnest desire was to do every thing in his power to comply with the wishes of his faithful commons. On the 31st of March, Mr. Pitt informed the house that he had that day resigned his office; but no new minister having been appointed, the coalition proposed fresh motions in order to hasten the completion of the arrangements.

On the 20th of April, a new administration was announced, of which the following were the principal members: the duke of Portland was first commissioner of the treasury; lord North, secretary of state for the home department; Mr. Fox, secretary for the foreign; lord John Cavendish, chancellor of the exchequer; lord viscount Keppel, first commissioner of the admiralty; lord viscount Stormont, president of the council; the earl of Carlisle, privy-seal: the great seal was put into commission, the first in the nomination being lord Loughborough; the earl of Hertford was appointed chamberlain, and the earl of Dartmouth steward of the household; lord viscount Townshend was made master-general of the ordnance; Mr. Burke, paymaster-general; Mr. Charles Townshend, treasurer of the

* The words inserted in italics are extracted from a motion of Mr. Fox, in 1782, against lord North and colleagues.

[Revival of commerce with America. Mr. Pitt's plan of reform.]

navy; Mr. Fitzpatrick, secretary of war; Mr. Wallace and Mr. Lee had the offices of attorney and solicitor-general; and the earl of Northington was appointed to the lord-lieutenancy of Ireland.

The first business that engaged the attention of the new ministers was to open a commerce with North America. By the prohibitory acts which had been passed during the revolt, all communication with that country in the way of trade, was entirely precluded; it was the prevailing opinion in parliament, that those acts were virtually repealed by the acknowledgment of the independence of the United States; nevertheless in their new character they became subject to other restrictions which it was necessary to relax and modify. A bill for this purpose had been brought into the house of commons by the late ministry, but during the great variety of discussions which it underwent, difficulties of such a complicated and important nature had arisen, that it never got through the committee. In the mean time, no regulations whatever having been stipulated by the treaty of peace, the commercial interests of the country were suffering very materially; for not only a great number of vessels richly freighted for America, were detained in the harbour, but there was a considerable danger of having the market pre-occupied by our rivals. In this emergency, the new ministers thought it most advisable to drop the whole bill for the present, and to pass two short laws, one to repeal all the prohibitory acts, the other to remove the necessity of requiring manifests or other documents, and to lodge in the king and council, for a limited time, a power to make such regulations as might be expedient.

On the 7th of May, Mr. William Pitt made a motion respecting the reform of parliamentary representation; the mode intended last year of examining the subject by a committee was accounted too general, he therefore designed to bring forward specific propositions. The object of the first was to prevent bribery at elections, the second proposed to disfranchise a borough which should be convicted of gross corruption; but that the minority of voters should be entitled to a vote for the county in which such boroughs should be situated; his third proposition was, that an augmentation of the knights of shires, and representatives of the metropolis, should be added to the state of the representation. He left the number for future discussion, but said he should recommend one hundred. The arguments both for and against a parliamentary reform were nearly the same as in the preceding session, but the supporters constituted a smaller proportion: the majority against the reform were two hundred and ninety-three to one hundred and forty-nine. On the eighth of June, the duke of Richmond introduced a motion respecting the great seal being put into commission. The appointment of judges (he alleged) commissioners, with large salaries and perquisites dependent on the will of the crown, tended to invalidate acts for securing the independency of the judicative officers: to ensure this great object it was necessary, he contended, first, that the tenure of their offices should be certain; secondly, that the amount of their salaries should be ascertained, and thus the temptations arising from fear of removal, or hopes of greater gain, would be prevented. His grace by a metaphysical disquisition on the nature of the passions, showed that hope and fear were such powerful affections, as often to overcome justice and rectitude: and having argued in support of his motion concerning the great seal, he proceeded to some general observations on the incompatibility of the situation of a

[Motion respecting the great seal. Prince of Wales.]

judge and a statesman, and endeavoured to support his reasonings by the authority of writers on political government. From his arguments and authorities he inferred, that neither the lords chief-justices, nor lords-chancellors, ought to sit in the house of peers. Lord Loughborough replied to his grace in a speech which was esteemed equal to any that ever was delivered, even by its author himself. The motion, he argued, proceeded on a visionary speculation, the mover had stated no actual grievance; but had proposed redress. The best and only test of political truth was experience; the practice had often obtained of putting the seals into commission; the judges had long sitten in parliament, no evil or inconvenience had been experienced in the administration of justice from their voice in the legislature, and most important benefit had accrued to parliament from their legal and judicial ability and knowledge. These were strong and striking facts not to be controverted by vague observations on the nature of hope and fear; such disquisitions belonged to the schools; legislatures rarely or never adopted them, but contented themselves with the application of law to any ill habit of the mind, as it became predominant, and inconvenient to the just and rational ends of government. A theory, professing to have for its object a practical corrective and improvement, should show what is amiss, and point out the manner in which it is to be reformed: on these grounds the motion was rejected. During this session a bill passed both houses for removing and preventing all doubts which had arisen or might arise concerning the exclusive right of the parliament and courts of Ireland in matters of legislation and judicature; and for preventing any writ of error or appeal from any of his majesty's courts in the sister kingdom from being received, heard, and adjudged, in any of his majesty's tribunals in Britain. Before the judicial and legislative independence of Ireland had been recognised, it was usual to remove causes by a writ of error from the Irish courts to the British. An appeal of this sort was before the court of king's bench when the last settlement was made; the chief-justice considering it necessary to proceed with pending suits, had given a judgment: this procedure, though unavoidable on the part of his lordship, had excited violent clamours in Ireland. To pacify these they proposed the present bill, though really implied in the general arrangement of the former year. A variety of economical regulations took place, more numerous than important. The objects, indeed, were the minute departments of public offices, such as salaries of clerks and their deputies, but no plan was proposed for diminishing the momentous departments of national expense.

George, prince of Wales, had now reached the years of manhood; and his age and dignified rank called for a separate establishment, as a measure agreeable to the uniform practice respecting the heir of the crown, while his personal character, his talents and accomplishments, rendered it additionally desirable that he should be placed in a situation in which he could more fully exhibit the elegance of his taste, the dignified and engaging gracefulness of his manners, the beneficent generosity of his disposition, his liberal patronage of merit, and his many other princely virtues. His highness in his early youth had attended little to party distinction, but gay and animated, intelligent, erudite, and refined, he had sought pleasure and wit, information, ability, and taste, wherever they were to be found. He was particularly captivated by the open,

[Indian affairs. Comprehensive statement of Mr. Dundas.]

liberal, and impressive manners, and the social qualities of Mr. Charles Fox, while he admired the unassuming greatness of his character. The habits of that gentleman were also peculiarly attractive to youth; he was no austere ascetic, he was pleasurable and gay; in point of frolic and indulgence, at thirty, such a companion as suited the ideas of eighteen. Through Mr. Fox, his highness came to associate often with the wit of a Hare and a Sheridan, and sometimes with the wisdom of a Burke. The party now in power was considered as most agreeable to his highness; but the proposal for the establishment was received with unanimity by all. It was found, on considering the royal message, that his majesty required only a temporary aid of sixty thousand pounds for the equipment of the prince, and that he meant to settle fifty thousand a year on his highness from the civil list. The sum desired was immediately voted, and an address of thanks presented to his majesty.

Indian affairs continued this year to occupy the unremitting attention of the two committees; but from the unsettled state of government, during a considerable part of the session, no important measures were adopted either for redressing the grievances, or investigating the delinquency stated in the reports, or forming systems for the future regulation of Indian affairs. Mr. Dundas having in the secret committee, investigated an immense mass of evidence, oral and written, in April 1782, exhibited a clear and connected detail of the state and the history of India, from the establishment of the new system of 1773; the real interests of the company, the general laws and successive special directions transmitted to the company's servants for the preservation and promotion of those interests; the actual conduct of the principal servants and their subordinate agents, and the existing situation of those settlements. From these multiform, numerous, and complicated materials, the energetic and simplifying mind of Mr. Dundas deduced the general principles in two great propositions. There was very gross mismanagement, which it became the deliberative wisdom of the legislature to correct, and also to devise means of improving the resources to the highest advantage. There was likewise an appearance of misconduct and misdemeanors, which it behoved judicial inquiry to examine. For these purposes he proposed that a committee of the whole house should sit upon the affairs of India. The two principal objects of inquisitorial procedure, stated by Mr. Dundas, were sir Thomas Rumbold, governor of Madras, and Warren Hastings, esq. governor-general of Bengal. Having in a variety of propositions drawn the outline of Mr. Hastings's alleged conduct, he moved a severe censure on the proceedings of the governor-general, and his coadjutor in council Mr. Hornsby; and a declaration that it was the duty of the directors to recall them from India.* He also moved a bill of pains and penalties against sir Thomas Rumbold, on various charges of peculation, corruption, and disobedience of the company's orders; violation of treaties, assumption of undue powers, and deterioration of the company's interest for his own private emolument, and that of his underlings: he moreover charged that officer with having bestowed iniquitous grants on the nabob of Arcot; by injustice and faithlessness provoked, for his own avaricious purposes, the enmity of the Nizam, and thereby en-

* The directors passed a resolution for the recall, which was afterwards overturned by the court of proprietors.

[His bill for the regulation of India. Abilities of Mr. Dundas.]

dangered the possessions of the company. As it was just and necessary that, before the bill should be passed, the accused should be heard in his own defence, and the subject was very extensive and intricate, by the prorogation of parliament, in July, it was necessarily postponed to the following session. So much of the session of 1783 was consumed in the debates between the parties, that it was late before sir Thomas Rumbold occupied a great share of their attention. Mr. Dundas persevered in supporting the charges against Rumbold, and controverting his defence. But towards the close of the session, the committee of the house was so thinly attended, and appeared so little concerned to ascertain the merits of the case, that the prosecutor deemed farther procedure hopeless, and agreed to a motion for postponing the consideration to a period when he knew parliament would not be sitting; and thus virtually abandoned the charge. In this session he proceeded to his second great object of more permanent consequence, the formation of a plan for the better management of the government in India, and brought in a bill for the purpose. The principal objects of this proposition were, to invest the governor-general with a discretionary power to act against the will of the council, whenever he should think it necessary for the public good; to allow the subordinate governors a negative on every proposition, till the determination of the supreme council should be known; to secure to the zemindars or landholders of Hindostan, a permanent interest in their respective tenures; to cause the debts of the rajah of Tanjore and of the nabob of Arcot to be carefully examined; to put an end to the oppressions of the latter, and the corrupt practices of his creditors, by securing to the rajah the full and undisturbed enjoyment of his kingdom; lastly, to recall governor Hastings, prevent the court of proprietors from acting in opposition to the sense of parliament, and to nominate a new governor-general. For this important office Mr. Dundas recommended the earl Cornwallis. Ministers intimated their disapprobation of some parts of this scheme, and also declared an intention of proposing a plan early in the following session; wherefore Mr. Dundas did not urge his bill.

The consideration of Indian affairs first afforded to Mr. Dundas an opportunity of completely exhibiting the powers and habits which combine to render him at once great and beneficial. During the administration of lord North, his abilities were but imperfectly known, because occasion had admitted of only partial exertion. He was distinguished as a clear, direct, and forcible reasoner; but he had not yet shown his abilities as a statesman. In the Indian inquiry, he manifested the most patient, constant, and active industry to investigate; penetrating acuteness to discover the nature and situation of affairs; enlarged views to comprehend their tendency; fertile and energetic invention to devise regulations both for correction and improvement. Mr. Dundas, indeed, when in opposition to ministers whose means of procuring their offices he did not approve, was far from considering invectives against administration as the chief business of a member of parliament. He planned and proposed himself, much oftener than he censured the propositions and schemes of others.

The supplies of this year having been voted before the reduction of the army, were nearly the same as in the former year; twelve millions were raised by a loan, the terms of which were severely censured by opposition, and defended by ministers on the ground of necessity. The new taxes

[New taxes. Internal state of Britain at the peace.]

were additional duties on bills of exchange, probates of wills, and legacies on bonds and law proceedings, and on stage coaches and diligences; also new imposts on certificates of marriages, births, and christening licenses for vending medicines, waggons and other commercial and agricultural carriages, on turnpike road and inclosure bills, on agreements and awards. The most important in its effects upon public opinion, and the popularity of ministers, was the receipt tax. This duty was perfectly agreeable to the principles of revenue, as it levied money in proportion founded on the extent of pecuniary transactions, by which it was to be presumed, the parties, if they acted judiciously, were deriving a benefit which could afford the respective rates. It was approved by able and candid financiers of all parties, both in and out of parliament: yet applying to transfers and other mercantile concerns that were recurring every day, hour, and minute, contravening former habits and constant practice it was infinitely more disrelished by the people, than a partial, oppressive and exorbitant impost, that would have been raised at stated and distant periods, and thus not perpetually press itself on the recollection and senses.

A session much more remarkable for debate than enactment, was terminated on the 16th of July, by a speech shorter and more general than usual. The complicated discussions between the late belligerent powers had prevented the definitive terms of peace from being finally settled: but his majesty had no doubt of their speedy conclusion. The affairs of the East Indies would require their early meeting in the following session. Meanwhile the king recommended to them to employ their influence in their respective districts in promoting a spirit of industry, regularity, and order, as the true sources of revenue and power to the nation.

The events of Britain either foreign or domestic, during the recess of 1783, were of little importance compared with those which the history has presented in recording the struggles of an arduous contest; the energy of war had ceased, the industry and enterprise of peace were not begun. The nation in the interval of action, seemed to be in a state of languor, from which it could be roused only by very strong stimulatives. Trade was stagnant, taxes compared with the supposed resources of the country, enormous; the national debt doubled in eight years, appeared overwhelming. Depression of situation and spirits, reciprocally increased each other, by action and reaction; distress encouraged despondency, despondency precluded exertion and enterprise, the only effectual means of alleviating and removing distress. Occupied chiefly by party contention, the legislature had, in the late session, devised no effectual means for the improvement of the peace: the present administration, however able many of its members actually were, did not possess the confidence of the majority of the people; and extrication from melancholy circumstances was not expected from their counsels. To these political causes of gloomy retrospect and forebodings, the present, though temporary, pressure of scarcity added its distresses. The crops of 1782 had been extremely deficient in all parts of these realms, and having been also unproductive on the continent, had much diminished the usual sources of importation. The wants of the poor concurring with so many other incentives to discontent produced great disturbances and riots in various parts of the country. In several places, especially puritanical

[Settlement of the Genevese emigrants.]

districts of Scotland, enthusiasm contributed its share to the disorders. The anti-popish societies still continued to exist among the very lowest orders; in the abhorrence of the Romish church great numbers of mechanics and manufacturing journeymen avowed their displeasure against that government by which they affirmed popery to be impiously protected. They insulted and outraged the magistracy, attacked the military, and even killed several soldiers. Their zeal becoming more eccentric and extravagant, they branched out into various sects, which, whatever might be the peculiar chimeras of their phrensy, concurred in disavowing allegiance, every moral obligation and duty, if they conceived them to interfere with their theological notions.* One sentiment they appeared to have borrowed from the fifth monarchy men of Cromwellian celebrity, that *all things are lawful unto the saints*. A relaxation of order manifested itself in a variety of crimes, especially around the metropolis. Theft and forgery were extremely frequent, robbery became more daring and atrocious, murder and barbarity, formerly so rare among English depredators, now abounded; the increase of depravity was great and alarming.

The national and public acts of the country at this season, were chiefly the evacuation of America on the 3d of September; and the preliminaries between Britain and the states-general were also subscribed the same day. This year a commotion in a distant state produced a considerable accession of arts and industry to his majesty's dominions; certain alterations having been proposed in the constitution of the illustrious though small republic of Geneva, a great proportion of the inhabitants were so averse to the changes, that they determined to emigrate, and appointed commissioners to collect information concerning asylums wherein they might enjoy the greatest security, and be able to improve to the best advantage their resources of property and character. In the beginning of 1783 these commissioners arrived in Dublin, and were received with affectionate kindness by the hospitable and generous Irish. The delegates of the volunteer corps of the province of Leinster unanimously resolved, that the inhabitants of Geneva, who sought refuge from oppression and tyranny, deserved the highest commendation; and that such of them as established themselves in that country should always receive the warmest support. The commissioners applied to government for its sanction to the desired settlement; and the lord-lieutenant was empowered by his majesty to signify not only his royal approbation and assurance of protection and regard, and the enjoyment of such privileges as would contribute to their welfare and prosperity; but to promise also pecuniary assistance to enable them to execute the projected emigration and establishment. Their commissioners were requested to detail the privileges and regulations which they wished to be granted to their intended place of residence; and were told, that after being approved by his majesty's law servants, they should be extended into a charter. It was recommended to the commissioners to examine, with all expedition, a situation for their new town; and further to establish in it an academy on the princi-

* The reader will find in the Gentleman's Magazine, and other periodical works for the year 1783, details and documents which fully authenticate and support this general account; especially Gentleman's Magazine, p. 249 and 340; London Magazine, p. 88; and Morning Chronicle, repeatedly, under the signature of a Scotch Highlander.

[Earthquakes in Calabria.]

ple of those of Geneva, through which the youth of all countries in Europe had derived such important benefit. The commissioners chose the county of Waterford as the scene of the proposed colony. Of these gentlemen, the most active was Mr. D'Ivernois, since so well known in political literature, by the title of sir Francis D'Ivernois.

While on the northern confines of the Alps, the dissensions of man were producing political separation; in that delightful country, which stretches from their southern frontiers, the discord of the elements caused a most tremendous natural convulsion. The portion of Italy which, from being a principal scene of Grecian colonies, was anciently known by the name of *Grecia Magna*; and in modern times bears the appellation of the Two Calabrias, suffered a succession of earthquakes, the longest, most dreadful and destructive to the face of the country, and to mankind, that was ever experienced in those regions. The first shock happened about noon on the 5th of February 1783, and was of all the most fatal; it came on suddenly, without any of the usual indications; it was about the Italian time of dinner, when the people were in their houses; but beyond all, the motion of the earth in that shock was vertical, rising suddenly upwards from its foundations, and as suddenly sinking again. By this fatal motion the greatest buildings, villages, towns, and entire cities were instantaneously involved in one common destruction; nothing remaining to be seen but vast heaps of undistinguishable ruins, without any traces of streets or houses. One of the towns and cities where the greatest devastation took place was *Casal Nuova*, in which the princess *Gerase Grimaldi*, with more than four thousand of her subjects perished in the same instant. At *Baguara*, above three thousand of the inhabitants were lost, *Radicina* and *Palma* counted their loss at above three thousand each: *Terra Nuova* at about fourteen hundred; and *Semina* at still more. The greater mischief was in *Calabria Ultra*, the extreme province of Italy next to *Sicily*. The inhabitants of *Scylla* sought refuge on the celebrated rock from its vicinity to which the town was denominated; and following the example of their prince,* descended to a little harbour at the foot of the hill, where getting into boats or stretched upon the shore, they thought themselves free from danger. But in the course of the night, a stupendous wave, which is said to have been driven furiously over land, upon its return swept away the unfortunate prince, with two thousand four hundred and seventy-three of his subjects. The northeast angle of *Sicily*, including the city of *Messina*, were likewise in a considerable degree victims of that shock. But the greatest violence of its exertion, and its most dreadful effects, were in the plain on the western side of the *Appennines*; mountains were rent, valleys closed; the hills that formed them being thrown from their places, and meeting their opposites in the centre, the course of rivers was necessarily changed, or the waters being entirely dammed up, they were turned into great and increasing lakes.†

* Many of the barons of the kingdom of Naples have the title of princes.

† The whole of the mortality, according to the returns made to the secretary of state's office in Naples, amounted to 33,567. These returns, drawn up in the confusion and misery that prevailed, could not be accurate; and it was supposed by the best judges, that the real loss, including strangers, amounted at least to 40,000. These estimates only take in immediate victims to the earthquakes; those who perished through want, diseases, anguish, and every species of subsequent distress not being included.

[Benevolence of the archbishop of Reggio.]

The earth in all that part of Italy continued for many weeks in a constant state of tremor ; and several shocks with different degrees of violence, were every day felt, so that the unhappy people, already worn down with calamity and grief, through the loss of their property and of their dearest relations, were still kept in a continual state of apprehension and terror. The king and government of Naples employed every possible means for both affording immediate relief to the sufferers, and assistance towards their recovery from the loss of their property. The archbishop of Reggio particularly distinguished himself for benevolence and charity. He disposed of his own furniture, equipages, and most productive moveables, and employed all the money he could raise to alleviate the distresses of his flocks. Having exhausted his pecuniary resources, he still, by infusing the cordial balm of sympathy, allayed those miseries which he could not remove. This truly christian pastor is not unworthy of being ranked with the celebrated bishop of Marseilles, as one of the numberless instances of the beneficent purposes to which recently reproached hierarchs applied their possessions.

CHAP. XXXI.

Constituents and strength of the coalition ministry.—Combines genius, political experience, and aristocratical influence.—Meeting of parliament.—His majesty's speech—recommends to their consideration British India—commerce and revenue.—Mr. Fox's East India bill—object, to vest the whole affairs of the company in certain commissioners to be appointed by parliament, and administer commercial as well as territorial concerns.—Arguments for the bill.—The company is in a state of bankruptcy, and unfit to manage its own affairs.—The enormous abuses of its servants, and the distresses of India.—The bill opposed by Mr. Pitt.—Arguments against the bill, that it is an infringement of chartered rights, without the justification of necessity—and the formation of an influence dependent on the present ministers—by Mr. Dundas—he charges Mr. Fox with aspiring at perpetual dictatorship.—Burke's celebrated speech on the extent and bounds of chartered rights.—Allegations against Mr. Hastings.—Petitions of the India company.—Bill passes the commons by a great majority.—Other corporate bodies petition against the violation of a charter.—Bill becomes obnoxious to the public.—Bill rejected by the lords.—Causes assigned by ministry for the rejection of the bill.—Alleged to be disagreeable to his majesty.—Reported interference through earl Temple canvassed in the house of commons.—Ministers dismissed their offices.—Character of Mr. Fox's East India bill—whether right or wrong, decisive and efficient—thoroughly adapted to its end, whether good or bad—tended to secure Mr. Fox's continuance in power, however that power might be used.—General outcry against Mr. Fox.—Impartial estimate of this political scheme.—Mr. William Pitt prime minister, with a minority in the house of commons.—Unpopularity of Mr. Fox and the coalition party.—Mr. Pitt's East India bill—rejected.—Question on dictation to the crown by the commons in the choice of a minister.—King, peers, and the public favourable to Mr. Pitt.—Attempt of independent gentlemen to effect an accommodation between the ministerial and opposition party.—Meeting for that purpose.—Correspondence with the duke of Portland and Mr. Pitt.—Design proves abortive.—Display of Mr. Pitt's talents and character in resisting such a confederacy of genius and power.—Public estimation of the contending leaders.—The king declares his intention of taking the sense of his people.—Dissolution and character of this parliament.

THE season now approached for the meeting of parliament: in the last session ministers had done little more than procure their appointments. They had proposed no important schemes of policy to ascertain their collective character: the public might conjecture what they would be, but could not yet know what they were. The coalition administration, it was obvious, had many symptoms of strength superior to that which was possessed by any ministry since the commencement of this reign. It combined the leading members of both parties that prevailed during the American war; united philosophy and genius with official experience: and to consolidate parts formerly heterogeneous into one mass, a great weight of aristocratic influence was superadded. Lord North retained many of his numerous supporters: Mr. Fox had a less numerous, but a still more able band of friends. The result of this union of genius, experience, rank, and property, was a majority seldom seen in favour of ministers from the time of the illustrious Pitt. The friends of this ministry conceived it to comprise all that was requisite to heal the wounds and restore the prosperity of their country. Its opponents, from the cha-

[Meeting of parliament. Speech of the king.]

acter of its principal members, and especially its acting head, equally expected boldness, decision, and efficacy; but a mischievous, not a beneficial efficacy. They conceived the leaders of the two component parties, by their extraordinary junction, to have sacrificed all public principle at the altar of ambition. They apprehended, that by forcing themselves into the counsels of their sovereign, they had thereby infringed the kingly prerogative, and in it the British constitution. Having so interpreted the views and conduct of administration, they inferred, that their measures would be directed to the preservation and extension of their own power, instead of the good of the country.

Parliament assembled on the 11th of November, and soon afforded an opportunity of considering the schemes of administration. His majesty's speech was short, but extremely comprehensive; the definitive treaties of peace had been concluded; the important and extensive inquiries long carried on respecting India affairs, were pursued with diligence, and the fruit of them would be expected in the provisions of parliamentary wisdom, to maintain and improve the valuable advantages which we derived from our oriental possessions, and to promote and secure the happiness of the native inhabitants of those provinces. The season of peace would call for their attention to every possible means of recruiting the strength of the nation, after such a long and expensive war. One of the first objects of deliberation was the security and increase of the revenue in the manner which should be least burthensome to the subjects. Dangerous frauds had prevailed, and daring outrages were committed respecting the collection of the public revenue: and to prevent the continuance of such depredations, it would be necessary to adopt new provisions. The house of commons were informed of the reduction of all the establishments as far as prudence would admit, of the closing expenses requisite at such a time, and reminded of the necessity of supporting the national credit.

The primary importance of these objects was undeniable; and an address consonant to the speech was unanimously passed in both houses. Mr. Pitt expressed his high approbation of the ends proposed by government, though he made some animadversions on the tardiness of ministers, in not having been farther advanced with measures for the accomplishment of such momentous purposes. On all these grand subjects, he counselled them to bring forward great, efficient, and permanent systems; as he highly applauded the ends which they professed to seek, he trusted the means which they would devise would be equally meritorious; in which case, they should have his warmest support. Mr. Fox, impressed with the very highest idea of Mr. Pitt's talents, declared, nothing could afford him more satisfaction as a minister, or proud exultation as a man, than to be honoured with the praise and support of Mr. Pitt.* He expressed very high approbation of the general principles which he had briefly sketched concerning the objects of their intended deliberation. He acknowledged that India affairs could ill brook delay: through the industry and ability of their committee, however, the time which they had occupied was the means of affording parliament the most accurate and complete information; so that no assembly could be better acquainted with the subject on which they were called to deliberate: he concluded with announcing, that, on the 18th of November, he should propose a plan for the government of India.

* Parliamentary debates, 1783-4.

[East India bill of Mr. Fox.]

On the day appointed, Mr. Fox moved the house for leave to bring in a bill for vesting the affairs of the East India company in the hands of certain commissioners, for the benefit of the proprietors and the public ; and also a bill for the better government of the territorial possessions and dependencies in India. In the former of these propositions, a preamble stated, that disorders existed and increased in the management of the British territorial possessions, revenues, and commerce, in the East Indies ; which diminished the prosperity of the natives, impaired and threatened with utter ruin the valuable interests of this nation. The government of the present directors and proprietors was to be suspended ; they were to be deprived of the whole administration of their territorial and commercial affairs ; of their books, papers, documents, and their house in Leadenhall-street. The total direction of all their concerns, mercantile, financial, and political, was henceforward to be vested in seven commissioners ; namely, William earl Fitzwilliam, the right honourable Frederick Montague, lord George viscount Lewisham, the honourable George Augustus North, sir Gilbert Elliot, sir Henry Fletcher, and Robert Gregory, esq. These commissioners were to be appointed for the first time by the whole legislature ; but afterwards by the crown : they were to hold their offices by the same tenure as the judges of England, during their good behaviour, and to be removed only by address from either house of parliament : they were to be assisted by seven directors ; who should each possess at least two thousand pounds India stock, and have no mercantile concern with the company. The first seven were named in the bill : vacancies were to be supplied by a majority of the proprietors, on an open poll. Any or all of the assisting directors might be removed by five of the commissioners ; and thus the commissioners were to hold the supreme direction and exclusive patronage of all India affairs. In the exercise of this immense power, they were required to come to a decision upon every question within a limited time, or to assign a specific reason for their delay. They must submit, once in every six months, an exact state of their accounts and establishments to both houses of parliament ; they were never to vote by ballot, and must enter upon their journals the reasons of their vote. Such were the outlines of this celebrated bill. The proposed plan appeared to combine efficiency in the powers intrusted, openness in the required progress of its exercise, and responsibility that it should be employed for the intended purposes. If, therefore, the objects were beneficial to our Indian interests and to the whole British empire, and the persons chosen were completely qualified for executing the trust reposed, there can be no doubt that their powers were fully sufficient. This bill for the general management of Indian concerns, was accompanied by a second bill, the professed object of which was, to prevent all kinds of arbitrary and despotical proceedings from the administration of the territorial possessions ; it defined the authority of the governor-general, suppressed all power of acting independently of his council, prescribed the delegation of any trust, and declared every existing British servant in India incompetent to the acquisition or exchange of any territory in behalf of the company ; to the conclusion of any treaty of partition ; to appoint to office any person removed for misdemeanour ; to lend to native powers the company's troops ; and to hire out any property to any civil officers of the company : it voided all monopolies, and declared every illegal present recoverable by any person for

[Arguments in favour of the bill. Opposed by Mr. Pitt.]

his own sole benefit. One part of the second bill particularly respected the zemindars, or native landholders, secured to them an estate of inheritance, without an alteration of rents; and endeavoured to preclude all vexatious and usurious claims; to forbid mortgages, and to subject all doubtful demands to the examination and censure of the commissioners. It prescribed a mode for terminating the disputes between the nabob of Arcot and the rajah of Tanjore; and disqualified every person in the service of the company from sitting in the house of commons during the continuance of his employment, and for a certain specified term after his dismission. As the scheme of Mr. Fox proposed to take away from the India company the management of the whole and every part of their own commercial affairs, as well as the territorial possessions, its author drew his arguments to support it from two sources: the embarrassed state of the company's finances; the durable and comprehensive abuses which had prevailed in the government of India. The distressed situation of the company's affairs he endeavoured to prove from the following circumstances: they had applied the preceding year to parliament for pecuniary assistance; they had asked leave to borrow five hundred thousand pounds upon bonds; they had petitioned for three hundred thousand pounds in exchequer bills; and for the suspension of a demand upon them, on the part of government, for seven hundred thousand pounds due for customs. By an act of parliament, the directors were prohibited from accepting bills beyond three hundred thousand pounds, drawn in India; yet, at this very time, bills to the amount of more than two millions were on their way from India for acceptance. Their actual debt was eleven millions two hundred thousand pounds; and they had stock in hand, towards paying this immense incumbrance, only to the amount of about three millions two hundred thousand pounds. The result of this comparison was a balance against them of eight millions; a deficiency which was extremely alarming, when compared with the capital of the proprietors. He would not hesitate to declare the company actually bankrupt: if they were not assisted, they must unavoidably be ruined; and the fall of a body of merchants so extensive in their concerns, and so important in the eyes of Europe, must necessarily give a very alarming blow to our national credit. Parliament must permit the acceptance to be made, and interfere for their support; but it would be absurd in itself, and unjust to the nation, for legislature to grant them succour, without taking for the public security the total direction of their pecuniary affairs. This was an interference not only wise but absolutely necessary. Concerning the abuses that prevailed in the government of India, he began with the conduct of the company at home, the nature of their connexion with their officers abroad, the conduct of the servants in general, and of Mr. Hastings in particular, elucidated from the reports of the committee. The plan which he proposed would, he contended, prevent the recurrence of such abuses, promote the prosperity of the British interests, and change the condition of the natives from oppression and misery to security and comfort.

The first, most strenuous and powerful opposer of the bill was Mr. Pitt. The reasons which he urged against it were reducible to two general heads. "The proposed scheme," he said, "annihilated chartered rights, and created a new and immense body of influence, unknown to the British constitution." He admitted that India wanted reform; but

[Reasoning of Mr. Dundas in opposition.]

not such a reform broke through every principle of equity and justice. The bill proposed to disfranchise the members, and confiscate the property of the East India company; it required directors, trustees chosen by proprietors for the behalf of those constituents, and under their control, to surrender all lands, tenements, houses, books, records, charters, instruments, vessels, goods, money, and securities, to persons over whom the owners were to possess no power of interference in the disposal of their own property; on what principle of law or justice could such a confiscation be defended? The rights of the company were conveyed in a charter expressed in the clearest and strongest terms that could be conceived. It was clearer, stronger, and better guarded in point of expression, than the charter of the bank of England: the right by which our gracious sovereign held the sceptre of these kingdoms, was not more fully confirmed, not farther removed from the possibility of all plausible question. The principle of this bill once established, what security had the other public companies of the kingdom? What security had the bank of England? What security had the national creditors, or the public corporations? or, indeed, what assurance could we have for the great charter itself, the foundation of all our privileges, and all our liberties? The power indeed was pretended to be created in trust for the benefit of the proprietors; but, in case of the grossest abuse of trust, to whom was the appeal? To the proprietors? No; but to a majority of either house of parliament, which the most drivelling minister could not fail to secure with the patronage of about two millions sterling given by this bill. But the proposition was still more objectionable in another way, it was calculated to increase the influence of the minister to an enormous and alarming degree. Seven commissioners chosen ostensibly by parliament, but really by administration, were to involve in the vortex of their authority, the whole treasure of India. These poured forth like an irresistible torrent upon this country, would sweep away our liberties and all we could call our own.

Mr. Dundas argued, that the immediate tendency of the bill was so far from being to increase the influence of the crown, that it must inevitably overbear its power: it created a fourth estate, which would overturn the balance of the three established by the constitution. The opposers of the bill proceeded to attack its author's motives. Mr. Fox was a man of the most splendid ability, the most intrepid and daring spirit, and unbounded ambition. He professed himself a party man, and it was a leading article in his political creed, that Britain ought to be governed by a party: to perpetuate such a government was the design of the present scheme. This bill exhibited all the most prominent features of its author's character and sentiments: its end was perpetual dictatorship to himself; the projected means were the whole influence of India, possessed and exercised by the members and agents of a party which were totally at his devotion. The motives of the coalition were before easily divined; new success encouraged them to unfold their intentions, and their designs became fully manifested. To force his way to the supreme direction of his majesty's government, Mr. Fox had coalesced with those statesmen whom he had uniformly professed to reprobate; he headed them in censuring that peace, which, in less trying circumstances, he uniformly professed to recommend: and thus found an opportunity of attaining the power which he through that coalition sought. His views

[Mr. Burke's celebrated speech on chartered rights.]

extending as he advanced, he now proposed to make his power perpetual and uncontrollable. Such was the opinion which Messrs. Dundas and Pitt, and their supporters, delivered concerning Mr. Fox's East India bill.

The combined force of philosophy, eloquence, and poetry, was employed by Mr. Burke in supporting this grand project of his friend. A considerable portion of his own reasoning was exerted to controvert the arguments drawn from the annihilation of the company's charter: he admitted, to the fullest extent, that the charter of the East India corporation had been sanctioned by the king and parliament; that the company had bought it, and honestly paid for it; and that they had every right to it which such a sanction and such a purchase could convey. Having granted this position to the opponents of the bill, he maintained, that notwithstanding that sanction and purchase, the proposed change ought to take place. He proceeded on the great and broad grounds of ethics, arguing that NO SPECIAL COVENANT, HOWEVER SANCTIONED, CAN AUTHORIZE A VIOLATION OF THE LAWS OF MORALITY; if a covenant operate to the misery of mankind, to oppression and injustice, the general obligation to prevent wickedness is antecedent and superior to any special obligation to perform a covenant: parliament had sold all they had a right to sell—an exclusive privilege to trade, but not a privilege to rob and oppress; and if what they disposed of for the purposes of commerce was made the instrument of oppression and pillage, it was their duty, as the guardians of the conduct and happiness of all within the sphere of their influence and control, to prevent so pernicious an operation. After laying down this as a fundamental principle, he proceeded to argue, that there had been, and were, the most flagrant acts of oppression in India, by the servants of the company; that the whole system was oppressive from the beginning of the acquisition of territorial possessions: he entered into a detail of the principal instances of rapine, violence, and tyranny, which were attributed to the English; and dwelt with superior energy and pathos on those acts of which he alleged Mr. Hastings to be guilty. No one undertook to deny, as an abstract proposition, that charters or any covenants contravening the principles of morality, and bringing misery on mankind, ought to be annulled: but the allegation was denied respecting the charter of the East India company. The BILL, it was affirmed, PROPOSED CONFISCATION WITHOUT PROOF OF DELINQUENCY. The proprietors and directors petitioned the house that their securities and properties might not be forfeited without evidence of criminality. They desired, that before the house passed a bill which would act as a condemnation, they should prove the guilt. One reason adduced by Mr. Fox for the proscription of their rights was, that they had mismanaged their own affairs, and were insolvent; they denied the alleged bankruptcy, and offered to prove by a statement of their demands and effects, that though somewhat embarrassed, their assets far exceeded their debts; and prayed their situation might be fully inspected before a bill, proceeding on an assumption of their being bankrupts, should be passed. LET NOT, they said, A PARLIAMENTARY DOCKET BE STRUCK WITHOUT GIVING US AN OPPORTUNITY OF CONVINCING EQUITY THAT WE CAN PAY EVERY CREDITOR TWENTY SHILLINGS IN THE POUND. The remonstrating entreaties of the company, and all the opposition in the house of commons, were unavailing: on the 8th of December the bill passed the house by

[Bill passed by the commons. Rejected by the peers.]

the large majority of two hundred and eight to one hundred and two.* The next day Mr. Fox, attended by a great number of members, presented the bill at the bar of the house of lords. When it came to the peers, it met, if not with an abler opposition; with a much more numerous in proportion to the number of the assembly. Great force of eloquence and reasoning were exerted on both sides; rarely indeed was there a fuller attendance, and perhaps never did a greater assemblage of ability display itself in the house of lords, than on so momentous a question, that engaged, on the one side, an able body of peers headed by lord Thurlow and lord Camden; on the other a no less able body, headed by lord Loughborough and lord Mansfield. In the house of commons, however, the arguments on both sides had been so completely exhausted, that little novelty appropriate to the question, could be brought forward even by such powers of genius. Lord Thurlow spoke to the attack on Hastings, which had been repeated in the house of peers. If (said he) he be a depopulator of provinces, if he be a plunderer, and an enemy to the human race, let his crimes be dragged into the light of day, and let him be punished, but not condemned without a trial.† Meanwhile, the bill had begun to produce a considerable alarm in the country. Other bodies now followed the example of the East India company, in petitioning against a measure which they considered as an atrocious violation of private property. In the house of peers the opponents of the bill proposed to defer its consideration for several days, until they should have time to receive more adequate information; its supporters were very urgent for the speedy completion of the scheme; but, the former prevailing, it was deferred. The bill was now become extremely obnoxious to the public; the majority of the house of peers exhibited the sentiment of a much greater proportion of a majority of the nation. The

* In the closing debate on this bill in the house of commons, Mr. Flood, a very eminent orator in the Irish parliament, lately chosen a member for Winchester, first spoke in the British parliament. Emphatic in his delivery, both pompous and vehement in his manner, he appeared rather to demand than to solicit the attention of the house. Such a mode of elocution, however valuable the matter might be, and cogent the arguments, certainly exposed the speaker to ridicule.—This engine was very happily played upon him in the poignant wit, keen and strong satire of Mr. Courtney; who without invalidating his opponent's arguments, silenced the oratory of Mr. Flood in the British house of commons.

† Mr. Hastings (he said) was one of the most venerable characters that this country had produced: he had served the East India company for thirty-three years, and twelve years as president at Bengal. He possessed a most extensive knowledge of the languages, the manners, the politics, and the revenues of Indostan. He was a man whose integrity, honour, firmness of mind, and perseverance, had encountered difficulties that would have subdued the spirit of any other man, and had surmounted every obstacle; no impediment, no opposition, could have been more formidable than that of the commission, which seemed to have been sent out for the express purpose of thwarting and opposing all his measures. When he considered the scene of confusion that ensued, the factious and personal spirit by which these men had been animated from the hour of their landing, he sincerely wished they had died before they had set foot in India. But Mr. Hastings had been able to overcome so arduous a trial, and such was the vigour of our government in Bengal; such were the regulations for the administration of justice in the provinces, and such the economical arrangements formed by the civil and military departments, that he did not believe it would be in the power of the folly and ignorance of the most favourite clerks Mr. Fox's directors could send out, to throw Bengal into confusion in the term that was assigned for the duration of his bill. See Parliamentary debates, Dec. 1783.

[Reputed interference of lord Temple.]

people appeared to have adopted a totally different opinion from the house of commons.* The motion for a second reading took place on the 15th, and the house being adjourned to the 17th, the question was put for the commitment, and carried against the minister by a majority of ninety-five to seventy-six; and thus Mr. Fox's celebrated India bill, after passing the house of commons, was rejected by the lords. The conduct of the peers, which in voting contrary to the house of commons concurred with the popular voice, was represented by the ministerial party as arising not from conviction, but from an extrinsic influence. His majesty, on investigating the nature, tendency, and probable consequences of the bill introduced by Mr. Fox, was understood to be inimical to its adoption. It was conceived, that the more our king reflected on the subject, he was the more deeply impressed with the mischievous effects of the scheme in question; that he thought it would overturn the balance of the constitution; and that under such an impression, he very freely delivered his sentiments to counsellors whom he did not think members of the coalition confederacy. Among those who enjoyed the greatest degree of the royal confidence was earl Temple, a nobleman of considerable talents, high character, and an ample fortune; totally unconnected with any party junto, and thereby not only capable, but most probably disposed, to give the best advice. A report prevailed, that in a private conference with his majesty, this nobleman, with the candour and honesty of a faithful and conscientious counsellor, had delivered his sentiments to the king; and that they coincided with those which the illustrious personage himself entertained. The report farther added, that the opinion of his majesty having been communicated to various peers, had influenced their votes. The clamour against such advisers was revived by ministry; and it was asserted that but for these, a majority in the lords would have forwarded the bill proportionate to that which had carried it through the house of commons. This rumour respecting the interference of the sovereign, was never authenticated; it however was believed by the supporters of the bill, and deemed the means of its rejection. The reports were considered by the coalition party of so great importance, as to be the foundation of several resolutions. On the 17th of December, the coalition speakers expatiated on secret influence, which, according to their assumption,† still existed. Mr. William Baker made a motion, seconded by lord Maitland, importing, that it was now necessary to declare, that to mention any opinion, or pretended opinion of the king, upon any bill or other proceeding in either house of parliament, with a view to influence the votes of the members, was a high crime and misdemeanor, derogatory to the honour of the crown, a breach of the fundamental privileges of parliament, and subversive of the constitution of the country. Mr. Pitt argued on the impropriety of a legislative assembly proceeding on unauthenticated rumours; that monster, public report, was daily fabricating a thousand absurdities and improbabilities; and it was the great-

* See a periodical paper of those times, entitled the Political Herald, which was edited by the elegant pen of Godwin, but supported by the abler pen of Gilbert Stewart, and frequently invigorated by the masculine strength of William Thomson.

† Authentic and impartial history must consider the assertion concerning secret influence, as an assumption, because the allegation was neither admitted nor proved.

[Reasoning of Mr. Fox. Dismission of ministers.]

est sarcasm upon every thing serious and respectable to suffer her to intrude on the national business, and for the house to follow her through all her shapes and extravagancies. He was asked, how ministers were to act when circumvented, as they complained of having been, by secret influence, and when the royal opinion was inimical to their measures? In his judgment, their duty, in a situation thus dishonourable and inefficient, was obvious and indispensable? The moment they could not answer for their measures, let them retire: the servants of the crown were worse than useless whenever they were without responsibility. Mr. Fox endeavoured to prove, that the present resolutions were necessary to mark the independence of parliament; and to decide whether it was to be governed by the wisdom and free choice of its members, or by the dictates of the crown. Taking for granted the existence of secret influence, he exercised his eloquence in describing the evils which it would produce. We are (he said) robbed of our rights, with a menace of immediate destruction before our face: from this moment farewell to every independent measure. Whenever the liberties of the people, the rights of private property, or the still more sacred privileges of personal safety, are vindicated by the house, the hopes of the public, anxious, eager, and panting for the issue, are to be whispered away, and dispersed to every wind of heaven, by the breath of secret influence. A parliament thus fettered and controlled, instead of limiting, extends beyond all limit and precedent the prerogative of the crown, and has no longer any use but to register the decrees of despotism, and the arbitrary mandates of a favourite. Thus, according to Mr. Fox, the constitution of England was to become despotical, if the house of commons did not reprobate a secret influence which rumour* only alleged to exist. A majority of one hundred and fifty-three to eighty voted for the resolution.

The conduct of his majesty evidently demonstrated that he was not only extremely averse to the East India bill, but highly displeased with its author. On the 18th of December, at twelve at night, he sent a message to the two secretaries of state, intimating that his majesty had no farther occasion for their services, and directing that the seals of office should be delivered to him by the under secretaries, as a personal interview would be disagreeable. Early the next morning letters of dismission, signed Temple, were sent to the other members of the cabinet. Immediately the places of first lord of the treasury, and chancellor of the exchequer, were conferred on Mr. William Pitt; lord Temple received the seals as secretary of state; and earl Gower was appointed lord-president of the council. On the 22d lord Temple resigned the seals of his office, and they were delivered to lord Sidney, as secretary of state for the home department; and to the marquis of Carmarthen for the foreign. Lord Thurlow was appointed high-chancellor of Britain; the duke of Rutland, lord privy-seal; lord viscount Howe, first lord of the admiralty; and the duke of Richmond, master-general of the ordnance; Mr. William Grenville and lord Mulgrave succeeded Mr. Burke in the pay-office; and Mr. Henry Dundas was appointed to the office of treasurer of the navy.

* The report was, that a circular card, supposed to have been written by lord Temple, had been transmitted to various peers, purporting his majesty's disapprobation of Mr. Fox's bill, as subversive of the power and dignity of the crown.

[Character of Mr. Fox's East India bill.]

Thus terminated the coalition administration, owing its downfall to Mr. Fox's East India bill. In whatever light we view this celebrated measure, we must allow it to be the effort of an expanded and towering genius. Whether the object was beneficial or injurious, the means were great, comprehensive, and efficacious. If, with its framer and supporters, we consider the East India company as guilty of the grossest misconduct in the administration of their affairs; as having brought themselves to a state of insolvency, and thus rendering it necessary for their principal creditor to interfere for his own security, and to prevent them from utterly ruining themselves, the plan was efficient: the company could no longer mismanage their affairs, for Mr. Fox left them none to administer. What the author said of the whole bill, applies to it with great truth: IT WAS NO HALF MEASURE. If the territorial concerns of the company had been so madly, wickedly, and destructively administered by the company's weakness and corruption, and the vices of its servants, the powers proposed by Mr. Fox to be conferred upon his seven friends, rendering them sole, supreme, and complete directors of British India, were thoroughly adequate to every purpose of correction of misconduct, prevention of abuses, and punishment of malversation; his provisions for the zemindars tended most effectually to give to those landholders the security of British subjects. The opponents of the bill, while they reprobated its tendency and design, fully admitted that extraordinary exertions of genius had been employed in adapting it to its end. Considering it as intended to make its seven executors lords of so great a part of the British empire, and its inventor imperial master of the whole, they allowed, that in its general principle, and in its particular provisions, relations, and dependencies, it was most skilfully, ingeniously, and completely fitted to establish in these realms, the government of an oligarchical confederacy, headed by Charles James Fox. Impartial history, without entirely adopting the opinion of either party, must see and exhibit in this plan a most forcible efficacy, that might operate in two ways: on the one hand, as its supporters asserted, it was thoroughly calculated for preventing the recurrence of such evils as had been recently prevalent: and on the other, it was no less obviously and directly fitted to confer on Mr. Fox and his connexions, a power new in the British constitution, far surpassing that which had before belonged to any body or estate under our polity, and without that control on which has depended, and depends, the integrity and efficacy of our several establishments and our political system. Concerning Mr. Fox's motives, the historian, like every other observer of human conduct, will infer intention according to the nature and tendency of the measure, compared with the circumstances of the case, and character of the agent. Examining the scheme, knowing that the ambition most frequently prevalent in great minds occupied no inconsiderable share of Mr. Fox's heart, and perceiving the bill so well framed to gratify that passion, he will not hesitate to assign the love of power as one of the motives. Aware, however, that an inventor, ardent in the promotion of a scheme, which has occupied his affections and faculties, and engaged in contemplating its direct and immediate adaptation to proposed ends, may overlook more indirect operations, or more distant consequences: he may conclude that Mr. Fox did not view, in their whole extent and force, the effects which, unless arrested in its course, the project might have produced. The most probable account which im-

[Impartial estimate of this political scheme.]

partial candour can present concerning this important subject of history, appears to be the following: Mr. Fox had acceded to the whig doctrine of governing this country by an aristocratical confederacy. Conscious of his own extraordinary talents, and desirous of that power which would have employed and displayed them, he expected and sought to be leader of an administration which should be supported by such a combination. The sovereign he well knew was averse to a party government. The misfortunes of the war having rendered the ministry of lord North very unpopular, the whig combination came into power. Finding, in the promotion of lord Shelburne, a deviation from the plans which the whigs had delineated, Mr. Fox and his party resigned. Their own combination not being sufficient to secure them the direction of public affairs, the whig party joined another, before hostile; and from their combined powers, forced the practical adoption of their maxim of ruling by a confederacy. Aware of the disagreeableness of such a ministry to him in whom the constitution vested the choice of executive servants, and naturally apprehending that he would avail himself of an opportunity to exert his own free choice, Mr. Fox, in framing his bill, appears to have endeavoured to guard against the probability of such an event. The permanence of Mr. Fox's connexion in administration, would evidently be a morally certain effect of his bill; and, therefore, may fairly be assigned as one of its principal objects. Mr. Fox's opponents illustrated their conceptions of his scheme, by comparing him to Oliver Cromwell, Julius Cæsar, Catiline, and other celebrated projectors of usurpation. But an attentive consideration of his character, dispositions and habits, and, above all, his uniform conduct, by no means justifies the charge of *solitary* ambition. Social in private life, Mr. Fox has always courted association in politics; ambitious of sway, he has sought not only to acquire it by, but to enjoy it with, a party. Besides, had he been ever so desirous of the solitary dominion of protector or dictator, he must have known, that in Britain he never could have attained so uncontrolled a power. His sagacity would not have suffered his designs so very far to outgo every probability of success. Confining the proposed schemes of this great man somewhat near the bounds of probable execution, the historian may fairly venture to affirm, that he intended, by his India bill to secure the continuance of power to himself, his whig confederacy, and their new allies: and that the whole series of his conduct was a practical adoption of the doctrines of his friend Mr. Burke, in his "Thoughts on the Discontents," exhibiting all the beauties of poetry and depth of philosophy, to minister to party politics, and applying the energies of his genius, the stores of his wisdom, and the fascination of his fancy, to show that Britain, disregarding the choice of the king, or the talents of the subject, ought to be governed by a whig association. On the whole it is evident, that one of the chief objects of the coalition was, to establish the united parties in the management of government. It is no less manifest, that the East India bill both tended, and was designed to secure to the confederacy the continuance of power. So far impartial history must concur with the opponents of the illustrious Fox. But the reasonableness of the censure, and even obloquy which he thereby incurred, is much more questionable. That Mr. Fox loved power is very obvious, and abstractly neither deserving of praise nor censure. There is little doubt that he was not the minister of the king's

[Grand, comprehensive and efficient.]

predilection and personal choice. The appointment of his executive servants is certainly by the constitution vested in his majesty; but various cases have occurred in the history of England, in which it was not only requisite, but necessary, for the king, in the exercise of his prerogative, to sacrifice private prepossessions to general good: such an event has happened and always may happen under a free constitution, of which the object is the welfare of the community. The court doctrine at this time, that Mr. Fox and his adherents merited the severest reprobation, *because* they wished to administer the government contrary to the inclination of the king, is by no means obviously true. The unbiassed historian must consider the question on the broad grounds of expediency. Had or had not Charles James Fox, in his parliamentary and executorial conduct, shown such intellectual talents, such force, energy, and decision of mind, as would have rendered him a momentous accession to the counsels of the nation, when the state of affairs required the exertion of the greatest abilities which it contained? Those who thought that he had manifested such talents and qualities, were by patriotic duty bound to support the continuance, or attempt the restoration of his power. Mr. Fox, though not thirty-five years of age, was an old senator: for ten years his wisdom, viewing situation and conduct, had predicted events and results with an accuracy almost prophetic. His lessons as a statesman, he had received from moral and political science, thorough conversancy with the British constitution, government, and interests, impressed more forcibly on his mind by practical contemplation of the errors of systems, the insufficiency of plans, and the imbecility of execution followed, to their fatal effects. *For only eleven months and a quarter*, in two cabinets, had he been minister. With the marquis of Rockingham, he, in four months, had pacified and enfranchised the discontented and oppressed Irish; he had prepared for terminating a ruinous war; and had promoted retrenchment of the expenditure, which was so burthensome to the nation. In the coalition ministry he had persevered in promoting economical regulations, which were so much wanted; and had begun successfully to move stagnant commerce. The India bill, even if admitted to be wrong in its object and principle, yet was certainly grand, comprehensive, and efficient. If there was error, it arose, not from the defect of weakness, but the excess of strength. It displayed a range of survey, a fertility and force of invention, a boldness and decision of plan, an openness and directness of execution, that stamped its author as a man of sublime genius, who fearlessly unfolded and published his conceptions. The impartial narrator, using the best of his judgment, must disapprove of the infringement of charters,* at least till proof was established that their objects had been violated, or deem the new power created greater than was either necessary for its purpose, or consistent with the balance of the constitution: but must acknowledge, that its territorial operation would have been thoroughly and immediately efficacious. The perspicuity of the whole, and every clause, manifested

* I have been informed by a member of the party, that some very eminent senators belonging to it, especially a gentleman who has since risen to be one of its heads, privately advised Mr. Fox to leave the commercial management to the company. If that advice had been followed, the chief ground of popular reproach would have been prevented, and Mr. Fox might have continued to be minister.

[Mr. Pitt prime minister. Tenure of his office.]

the extent and bounds of the delegated power, defined the mode of its exercise, and the open responsibility under which the trust was to be discharged; and in marking the line of duty, showed the unavoidable consequences of transgression; by precluding the probability of unpunished guilt, it tended to prevent the recurrence of oppression; ascertaining the tenure, and securing the rights of property, it would stimulate industry, and render British India infinitely more productive to the proprietors and nation, besides diffusing comfort and happiness to the natives, so long the objects of an iniquity which was disgraceful to the British name. These were the benefits which must have obviously resulted from the plan of Mr. Fox. The confiscation of charters could only be defended on the ground of necessity, and Mr. Fox had not evinced that necessity, and was therefore precipitate and blamable in proposing to proceed upon an assumption, in a case of so high an importance both as to policy and justice. But his propositions on this part of the subject did not necessarily imply unfair intentions. The influence which must have accrued to the confederacy might have been formidable to the constitution, but if it proved so, its dangers must have arisen from the legislators, the guardians of our polity, and to these the proposed commissioners were to be amenable. The new influence might increase ministerial majorities in parliament, but great means of such an augmentation must have arisen from any plan for taking the territorial possessions under the direction of the British government. His East India scheme, both in itself and in combination with his other acts, and the series of his conduct, displayed those talents and qualities, which, when joined, place the possessor in the highest rank of statesmen, and show him fully competent to render to his country the most momentous services. The plan itself is of a mixed character, and liable to many strong objections, yet the impartial examiner will not easily discover, in the whole of this scheme, reasons to convince him that *because Mr. Fox proposed this plan for governing India, it was beneficial to the country to be deprived of the executorial efforts of his transcendent abilities*. The historian, unconnected with party, and considering merely the will and power of individuals or bodies to promote the public good, must lament what truth compels him to record, that a personage equalled by so few in extent of capacity and force of character, in fitness for benefiting the nation, during a political life of thirty-five years, should have been enjoyed as a minister by his country only *once for three months and a half, and again for seven months and three quarters*. The situation of the empire required the united efforts of the greatest political abilities, but Britain was not destined to possess the executorial exertions of BOTH her most consummate statesmen.

By the dismissal of ministers the country found itself in a new situation, about to be governed by an administration, which a very powerful majority in the house of commons thwarted. The new prime minister was a young man in the twenty-fifth year of his age, supported by no family influence, or political confederacy; having no adventitious props: resting solely on his own ability; aided by those whose admiration and confidence his intellectual and moral character had secured; without any means of extending his influence and increasing the number of his friends, but those to be found in his own head and heart. If talents, integrity, and conduct, could not create a general confidence and support, which might overbear a particular combination, he must fall. The splendid

[Unpopularity of Mr. Fox and the coalition.]

fame of the father, it is true, had spread an early lustre round the son ; but hereditary glory would have little availed against such a host, without similar virtues. Able individuals supported him, but against so compact and strong a phalanx, little would have been their weight, unless invigorated, directed, and led by extraordinary talents. The majority in the house of commons was very great, and there was little prospect of its being materially reduced. It was obvious that no ministry could be of long duration without the support of a house of commons : it was readily perceived, that either ministry or parliament must be dissolved. The consequences of a dissolution depended simply upon the prevailing sentiment throughout the nation. Mr. Burke has remarked that the house of commons ought to be *an express image of the opinions and feelings of the people*. If in the present case such a sympathy existed between representatives and constituents, dissolution could answer no purpose, as a majority friendly to the coalition must be returned ; but Mr. Fox's party appeared not to entertain sanguine hopes from such an appeal.

Having endeavoured to the best of my judgment to exhibit the conduct of Mr. Fox and his supporters as it really was, it is necessary, in order to show the connexion of events, to exhibit the impression which it had made on the majority of the people ; as that impression, much more than the real merits of their policy, produced their permanent exclusion from the councils of their sovereign. A comprehensive biographer, who should view the whole conduct and character of Mr. Fox, estimate excellence and defect, and strike an impartial balance, after allowing grounds of censure, must unquestionably perceive that there remained an immense surplus of subject for transcendent admiration. But perhaps there never was an eminent man whose actions and character, viewed in partial and detached lights, could lead an observer to grosser misconception of the whole. Both his private and public life were of a mixed nature. The most sublime genius, the most simplifying and profound wisdom, did not preclude the indulgence of propensities, and the recurrence of acts, diametrically opposite to reason and sound judgment. Ardent benevolence and patriotism did not prevent the encouragement, by both precept and example, of practices and habits injurious to the individual, and, according to the extent of their influence, prejudicial to the public welfare. Just and honourable himself, his amusements and relaxations promoted vices tending to render their votaries unjust and dishonourable. In every part of his conduct, Mr. Fox was extremely open ; if there was ground of blame, it must be known, as no endeavours were used for concealment. His supereminent excellencies could be apprehended but very vaguely and indistinctly, unless by comparatively few ; but his faults were obvious to the most vulgar examiners. As the multitude of all ranks and denominations were incompetent to form a judgment of such a man themselves, they took up their opinions upon the report and authority of others ; these were favourable or unfavourable according to the sentiments and wishes of their authors. Where his enemies were the teachers of the opinions, in partial views of his conduct, they found plausible grounds of censure and obloquy. Besides the foibles of his private life, his public conduct afforded ample materials to advocates, who chose to assail his reputation. From the time that the American war, by the losses which it produced, and the burthens which it imposed, brought

[East India bill imperfectly understood by the people.]

home to the experience and feelings of the people, became unpopular, the most ardent and powerful promoter of peace was regarded as the patriot who was to extricate his country from impending ruin. His popularity became still higher, as he procured a vote for the discontinuance of the war, and expelled the obnoxious ministers from the councils of the king. Under the government of the whigs, the people expected the empire to recover its ancient splendour, and themselves their former comforts and prosperity. The reforming and improving acts of the Rockingham administration confirmed this opinion. When on the appointment of lord Shelburne, Mr. Fox withdrew his abilities from the councils of his country, many began to be staggered in their conviction of his patriotism; but when the coalition took place, the gross and undistinguishing multitude was satisfied, that a junction between two parties and two men formerly so hostile, must be bad and mischievous in itself. Its able opponents saw, that the mere junction was neither good nor ill, but that the justness of censure must depend on the objects and subsequent conduct of the confederacy; yet aware, that this reasoning was too refined for the comprehension of the multitude, with great skill, dexterity, and effect, they re-echoed "*the monstrous inconsistency of the coalition*;" and when its members came into administration, impressed great numbers of the people with a belief, that a ministry so formed, must be unprincipled and worthless, however able and powerful. The receipt tax drawing hourly on their pockets, though in so petty sums, teased and fretted their minds already sore. The East India bill, in its objectionable parts, the infringement of charters, and the forcible interference in the administration of a mercantile company's affairs, was perfectly intelligible to the most common apprehensions; shocked the ideas of a trading people, and suggested probable cases, which by obvious analogies could be brought home to their own feelings; whereas the benefit that might accrue to British India and its native inhabitants, much less attracted their attention, affected their imaginations, or interested their passions. A plain farmer, manufacturer, or tradesman, could easily conceive the hardship of having his affairs subjected to trustees not chosen by himself, when he knew or believed himself to be solvent, and competent to the administration of his own concerns; while the benefit that might accrue to the inhabitants of Hindostan were not likely to make a very deep impression on his mind. In Mr. Fox's East India bill, the real or probable evils, like the defects of his general character, were manifest to a common understanding; but its real or probable benefits, like the excellencies of his general character, required comprehensive views, penetrating sagacity, and great abilities, to estimate and appreciate. Mr. Fox himself, and his supporters, ardent in pursuing their great scheme, though they anticipated, and, at least, with uncommon ingenuity controverted in parliament,* the principal objections that were urged; yet they did not sufficiently regard the impression made out of parliament by these objections, until it was too late. Mr. Fox in this as in many other measures, attending to what was great and momentous, overlooked various particulars which, though apparently little, were really important. His enlightened mind valuing the literature for which he himself and many of his

* See Burke's speech on chartered rights.

[Classes hostile to Mr. Fox. Comparison with Mr. Pitt.]

supporters and coadjutors were so eminently distinguished, and aware of the importance of the press as a political engine, had secured the ablest contributors to periodical publications.*

But these efforts of genius were not directed to the objects wherein assistance was chiefly wanted: they were addressed to scholars, statesmen, and philosophers, instead of the great mass of the people, among whom an alarm against the coalition was spreading itself so widely. The opposite party, with more dexterous skill, disseminated writings which simplified arguments or allegations to the comprehension of the multitude, and impressed their feelings. In running the race of popularity, the anti-coalitionists, by skilful direction to the goal, surpassed the forcible and energetic movements of the coalitionists deviating from the course. Many of the independent landholders,† merchants, and manufacturers, partook of the alarm, and tended to increase it through the nation; that great and opulent body, the dissenters, were, with few exceptions, inimical to the coalition, and this their principal scheme. All those who were privately or domestically dependent on the king, attached to his person, and desirous of gratifying his wishes; all who by habit, predilection, or office, were more connected with the splendour of the court than the politics of the cabinet, were inimical to a party which they conceived or knew to be disagreeable to the sovereign. But the principal source of popularity to the anti-coalition party, was the character of its juvenile leader, who was conceived equal to Mr. Fox himself in talents; known to be much superior in moral habits; free from the imputation of vice or of political inconsistency; and presumed, from his character and conduct, more likely to apply with undeviating constancy to public business, and with more steady patriotism to seek the national good, than a personage whose extraordinary abilities might be interrupted or perverted by his foibles and propensities, the connexions and associates which these generated. The character and habits of Mr. Pitt were much more favourable to the promotion of confidence among the monied men than those of his opponent, and in his late defence of chartered rights he was regarded as the champion of mercantile corporations, which enhanced his popularity among individual capitalists. There was a class of men distinguished by the title of the king's friends, emanating, according to the whig hypothesis, from the secret influence junto, which during so great a part of the reign had been conceived to exist, and to direct public and more ostensible politicians. To these the Rockingham party, which they considered as a hostile phalanx, was much more disagreeable than the band which, after the death of Chatham, was headed by earls Temple and Shelburne. Mr. Pitt, as a member of the Temple party, was much more agreeable to these courtiers than Mr. Fox, member of the whig party. He had not joined the whig administration in 1782, and in 1783 had spoken and voted with those that were understood to occupy the greatest share of royal favour. Pleasing and engaging as Mr. Fox's manners are, yet his character is too open, and perhaps too unguarded, for the reserve and caution indispensable at courts, where a Mrs. Masham may overturn a Marlborough. Mr. Pitt resembling Fox in the highest

* See the magazines and newspapers of the time, and also the Political Herald.

† A treatise by sir William Pulteney, very vigorously written, was powerfully efficacious in impressing on the public a detestation of the plan, and a dread of its author.

[Ministerial popularity. Proceedings of parliament.]

talents for the great politics of the cabinet, somewhat surpassed him in the secondary politics of the court. Though too independent and dignified for the habitual suppleness of a mere instrument of splendour, yet prudent as well as able, he had the address and concealment of a skilful courtier. To this statement of comparative personal virtues, a retrospect of their fathers, allowing the just merit to the one, but attributing unimproved demerit to the other, produced, with the multitude, a great additional influence in favour of Mr. Pitt.* From all these causes, the tide of popularity ran so high in favour of the new ministers, as to render an appeal to the nation desirable to them and hurtful to their adversaries. But such a measure was not immediately practicable with safety to the country; supplies were urgently wanted for the public service, and could not be deferred till the meeting of a new parliament. The majority in opposition could refuse the supplies in order to retard dissolution. The land tax bill was then pending; the 20th of December, the day after the change of ministry, had been appointed for the third reading; the majority, however, agreed to put off its consideration. On the 22d, the house sat as a *committee on the state of the nation*: a resolution was moved by Mr. Erskine for an address to his majesty, to state the alarming reports of a speedy dissolution; mentioning the territorial and commercial affairs of the India company as requiring their immediate attention; and praying his majesty to suffer them to proceed on the important business recommended to them in his speech from the throne; to hearken to the voice of his faithful commons, and not to the secret advices of persons who might have private interests of their own, separate from the true advantage of the king and his people. His majesty's answer, delivered on the 24th of December, admitted the urgency of the subject stated in their address, and pledged the royal promise, not to interrupt the house, either by prorogation or dissolution. The majority was not satisfied with this answer of the king, which appeared to them to afford no certain prospect that his majesty would long abstain from exerting the prerogative vested in him by the constitution. They therefore proceeded with precautions against this event: by an ACT OF PARLIAMENT, the lords of the treasury were empowered to permit, at discretion, the directors to accept bills from India: the house of commons passed a *resolution* to prohibit the lords of the treasury from accepting any more bills from India, till the company should prove to that house that they had sufficient means for their payments, after having discharged their current demands, and the debt due to the public. The amount of this prohibition was, that the house of commons assumed to itself the power of suspending an act of parliament. On the 26th, the house adjourned to the 12th of January: during the recess, each party was employed in strengthening itself, and in forming its political measures. When parliament was assembled, Mr. Fox moved, that the committee on the state of the nation should be resumed. After several subordinate motions, a resolution was proposed, that, in the present situation of his majesty's dominions, it was peculiarly necessary there should be an administration which had the

* The *two pair of portraits*, by Mr. Horne Tooke, with the greatest pungency and force converge this kind of argument; but in point of justness, resemble the labours of an arbitrator, who debiting one side without allowing any credit, and crediting the other without charging any debit, should publish the result as an award exhibiting a fair balance of accounts.

confidence of that house and the public. In this motion his majesty's name had been omitted. Mr. Dundas, in order to point out the real spirit of the resolution, as well as the actual state of the state; and, that not the confidence of one branch, but the whole legislature was requisite to ministers; proposed an amendment, substituting, instead of the words confidence of *this house and the public*, "confidence of the crown, the parliament, and the people:" the amendment was rejected, and the original resolution was passed. Another proposition was immediately adopted, to the following purport: "that the late changes in his majesty's councils had been preceded by dangerous and universal reports; that the sacred name of the king had been unconstitutionally used to affect the deliberations of parliament; and that the appointments made were accompanied by circumstances new and extraordinary, and such as did not engage the confidence of that house." This resolution manifestly referred to the report concerning earl Temple: it occasioned a very warm debate, which contained much personal invective, and repeated all the arguments for and against both parties: the resolution was carried in the affirmative.

On the 14th of January, Mr. Pitt, notwithstanding the majority in favour of opposition, introduced a bill for the better government and management of the affairs for the East India company. His scheme proposed the appointment of commissioners by his majesty, from the members of his privy-council, who should be authorized and empowered from time to time to check, superintend, and control, all acts, operations, and concerns, which related to the civil or military government, or revenues, of the territorial possessions. Two members of the said board should be the chancellor of the exchequer and the secretary for the home department; the board should have access to all the papers of the company; and the court of directors should deliver to the board copies of all the proceedings of both courts of directors and proprietors: copies of all despatches received from the company's servants in India, and the instructions sent and proposed to be sent to India, relating to the civil or military government, or revenues of the British territorial possessions. The court of directors should pay due obedience to the orders of the board, respecting civil and military government and revenue; the board, in a limited time, were to return the copies which were received, with their approbation, or disapprobation, of the proceedings communicated: or proposing amendments if they found them unsatisfactory. The board was fully to state their reasons, and also their farther instructions, to be sent to India without delay. Should the directors conceive any of the orders of the board to be extra-official, in not relating to the civil, military, and financial government of India, to which the bill was limited, they should apply, by petition, to his majesty in council, concerning such injunction; and the decision of the council thereon should be final and conclusive. The nomination of the commander in chief should be vested in his majesty, and that officer should always be second in council. The king should also have the power of removing any governor-general, president, and members of the councils of any British settlements in India; all vacancies in their offices should be supplied, subject to his majesty's disapprobation, that might be repeated until one was chosen whom he should approve. No order or resolution of any general court of proprietors should have power to revoke or rescind, or affect any proceeding of

[Reasoning of Mr. Fox. Bill rejected by the commons.]

the court of directors, after his majesty's pleasure should have been signified upon the same. Such are the outlines of Mr. Pitt's scheme for the government of India. A great and leading difference between this project and the plan recently rejected by the lords is, that the former left the charter untouched, and the commercial concerns of this corporation of merchants under the sole management of the proprietors themselves and the directors of their choice. The company itself was so thoroughly convinced of their charter not being wantonly infringed, that they approved,* as proprietors and directors, both of its principle and regulations. By the former bill, the entire transfer of the company's affairs to commissioners nominated in parliament, and the permanent duration of their authority for a term of four years, had occasioned great alarm, as creating a new power dangerous to the constitution. The object of the present bill was merely control. In supporting his own proposition, Mr. Pitt expressed his high admiration of that part of Mr. Fox's scheme which respected the zemindars, but he disapproved general indiscriminate confiscation. He proposed, therefore, that an inquiry should be instituted for the purpose of restoring such as had been irregularly and unjustly deprived, and that they should be secured against violence in future. These last provisions were not included in the bill which he had prepared for the consideration of the house, but they formed a part of his general ideas for the reformation of India. Mr. Fox argued against this bill, as inadequate to the correction of the enormous abuses which pervaded the administration of British Indostan. The bill, by continuing the powers of the court of directors, and rendering them dependent for their existence upon the proprietors, had no tendency to eradicate any mischief, or to obtain any valuable improvement; the connexion between both and their servants abroad, that had been the source of so many evils, would still continue. The governor-general was to have the same powers of internal regulation as before, and which had produced so great and manifold abuses. But this bill provided the remedy of recall: and of what value was this remedy? Did not all the officers of state, whether political or military, depend upon the governor-general? Would they not regard him therefore as one in whose official existence they were peculiarly interested? Would they not, if he should choose to be refractory, strengthen his principles of disobedience? The governor-general must be more than man to withstand so potent a temptation, surrounded and fortified by a variety of individuals in every department of life, who owed their existence to him; it was not the orders of a body of men, however respectable, that were in a great measure unconnected with the country wherein he resided, that could control his conduct. Mr. Pitt's scheme would throw a great mass of patronage into the hands of the crown. It tended (Mr. Fox said) not to remedy any of the evils which had subsisted for so long a time, or to put a period to those barbarities which had stigmatized and rendered infamous the character of Britain in the annals of India. If adopted, the company might, as in former instances, replenish their letters with moral precepts, but our eastern possessions would be irrecoverably lost to this country. To these objections it was replied, that Mr. Pitt's bill had all the efficiency necessary to correct abuses, prevent their recurrence, and improve our

* See proceedings of the courts of directors and proprietors, in January, 1784.

creating a new power in the empire inconsistent with the established constitution. Acknowledging the defects of the present government of India, it was intended to lodge a principal share of the executive power where it ought to be vested. It showed the utmost tenderness to the privileges of the company, and would produce that happy and desirable mixed government, which every friend to the immunities of a great commercial association, and every supporter of our free constitution, would cheerfully welcome. Though it attributed new powers to the monarchical branch of our polity, yet were they so circumscribed, that they could not, in the hands of the most abandoned prince, be converted into instruments of mischief and oppression; these arguments did not avail, and Mr. Pitt's bill was rejected by a majority of two hundred and twenty-two to two hundred and fourteen.

Meanwhile addresses were pouring in from all quarters to the sovereign, to testify the highest satisfaction at the dismissal of the coalition ministry, and the appointment of the administration headed by Mr. Pitt. The coalition party, the more they heard the voice of the public, the more they laboured to retard an event which would be an appeal to the opinion and sentiments of their constituents. While Mr. Pitt's India bill was pending, Mr. Fox proposed to defer the second reading of the mutiny bill until the 23d of February, and thus procure a respite for a month; and the motion was adopted. It was immediately followed by another, which asserted, that the continuance of the present ministers in trusts of the highest importance and responsibility, was contrary to the principles of the constitution, and injurious to the interests of the king and his people. In support of this motion, the coalition leaders did not attempt to establish delinquency: the arguments proceeded from an assumed principle, that a minister ought not to continue in office without the support of the house of commons: this was the basis of their reasoning, and unless it was firmly founded, all the superstructure must fall to the ground. If the position was true, its truth was to be ascertained either by positive law, or by general and admitted practice. By the constitution, the king has the power, as chief executive magistrate, of choosing his own officers (unless under specific disqualifications, not imputed in the case in question) for performing the several branches of the executive duties. The house of commons has a right to impeach, on the ground of malversation in office, any of the ministers; but not to prescribe to the king in his choice of a minister. As the majority of the commons did not attempt to *prove* that they possessed a constitutional right of dictation to the crown respecting the choice of its officers, the weight of their arguments rested entirely on the *authority* of the superior numbers of commoners.

It may be proper to estimate the exact amount of this authority, in order to ascertain how far it was right or wrong, wise or unwise in government, to admit or reject it as a rule of conduct, when unsupported by law and precedent. Of the commons, two hundred and five against a hundred and eighty-four, voted that the minister ought not to continue in office, because he was not trusted by the house of commons. The house of lords, on the 4th of February, took this business into consideration; and the earl of Effingham moved two resolutions; the first referring to the proposition of the house of commons, prescribing the restriction of the lords of the treasury from consenting to the acceptance of bills from India; secondly, to the vote of January the 16th, against the

[The King, lords, and public, favourable to Mr. Pitt.]

continuance of the present ministers in office. His lordship proposed, that the house should resolve, first, that an attempt in any one branch of the legislature to suspend the execution of law, by separately assuming to itself the direction of a discretionary power, was unconstitutional: secondly, that by the known principles of this constitution, the undoubted authority of appointing to the great offices of executive government was solely vested in the king; and that that house had every reason to place the firmest reliance in his majesty's wisdom in the exercise of this prerogative. The lords in opposition endeavoured to justify the interference of the house of commons, on the ground of expediency, founded on particular circumstances of the case which the act of parliament could not foresee. It was, they said, intended to prevent the India company from contracting engagements for two millions sterling, to the prejudice of the public, their principal creditors. Lord Thurlow insisted that this was a peremptory order, which the house of commons had no right to issue in contravention of the law of the land. If he had been a lord of the treasury he would not have obeyed the resolution of the house of commons; and would have refused compliance on this plain principle, that nothing short of an act of parliament, formally passed by the three states of the realm, had the power of suspending any part of the statute or the common law of England. The chief subject of controversy was the second resolution. The supporters of Mr. Fox deprecated the dissension which the proposed interference must excite between the peers and commons; justified the commons on the ground of general expediency; and insisted that the house of commons, by the spirit of the constitution, had a right to control the choice of a minister. The ministerial lords, especially the chancellor, denied the existence of any such right, and challenged its asserters to establish it by proof. In this attempt their arguments not being satisfactory, a majority of a hundred to fifty-three of the peers voted for lord Effingham's resolutions and consequent address. The majority of the peers consisted of almost two to one in favour of the kingly prerogative of choosing his own servants. The majority of the commons, for rendering the exercise of that executive power dependent on the arbitrary will of one branch of the legislature, was only about ten to nine. The nation in general manifested its wishes in favour of the minister chosen by the crown. Thus, if the authority of opinion was to determine whether the present minister should or should not continue in office, (and the house of commons adduced no other argument,) there was on the one hand the opinion of a small majority of the house of commons, on the other the opinion of a great majority of the house of peers, and evidently of by far the larger portion of the nation, and the choice of the king. While, however, there was a majority of the house of commons, that majority, be it ever so small, was the house, and no minister could retain his situation thwarted by the house. The king, ministry, and public, saw that the present majority in the house of commons did not represent the opinion, sentiments, and wishes of their constituents. It was resolved not to succumb to dictatorial mandates that could not be enforced: Mr. Pitt, on the 18th of February, informed the house that the king had not, in compliance with the resolution of the commons, dismissed his ministers, and that the ministers had not resigned. Mr. Fox, persisting in his assumed principle, contended that by retaining the ministers after the disapprobation of the house had been signified, the crown had degraded the representatives of the people to the lowest

insignificance. Mr. Pitt insisted that there was no attempt to degrade the house of commons, or to infringe any of its rights, but merely an endeavour to prevent it from usurping the right of another branch of the legislature. It was apprehended that opposition, finding no other hopes of success, would refuse the supplies; but Mr. Fox, bold and adventurous as he was, appears to have been averse to a measure which would throw the country into such disorder.

While the opposite parties were engaged in contentions so detrimental to public business, impartial men desired a coalition which should comprehend the chief talents of both sides, and produce a sacrifice of private competition to the public welfare; retain the abilities of Mr. Pitt and lord Thurlow in the councils of their country, and join with them the abilities of Mr. Fox and lord-Loughborough; and disregarding either court predilections or whig confederacies, should choose for the various offices men most qualified and disposed for discharging their respective duties. With this view a considerable number of independent gentlemen met at the St. Alban's tavern on the 26th of January, and drew up an address recommending an union of parties. This being signed by fifty-three members of the house of commons, was presented by a committee to the duke of Portland and to Mr. Pitt. The duke of Portland answered he should be happy in obeying the commands of so respectable a meeting, but that the greatest difficulty to him was Mr. Pitt's continuance in office. Mr. Pitt expressed his readiness to pay attention to the commands of so respectable a meeting, and co-operate with their wishes to form a stronger and more extended administration, if the same could be done consistently with principle and honour. In the farther progress of the discussion, the duke of Portland proposed as a preliminary step, that Mr. Pitt should resign in compliance with the resolution of the house of commons. Mr. Pitt declared that it was inconsistent with his principles and sentiments to resign his ministerial capacity in the present circumstances. The duke of Portland proposed the same preliminary repeatedly in different forms, but Mr. Pitt still declared it inadmissible, and the duke of Portland insisted on it as an indispensable step; the negotiation, therefore, was suspended. Mr. Fox and Mr. Pitt expressed their sentiments to the house: both appeared impressed with a sense of the benefits that might accrue from a united administration, but neither would relinquish their respective principles. Mr. Fox insisted that it was unconstitutional in Mr. Pitt to hold his place after such a vote of the house of commons; that therefore he must resign. Mr. Pitt insisted that it was not unconstitutional, and would not consent to resign: resignation would be the virtual admission of a control in the house of commons which he denied them to possess. The reciprocal communications between the duke of Portland and Mr. Pitt had been hitherto carried on through the committee at the St. Alban's tavern. Still anxiously earnest to compass the desired union, these patriotic members proposed that his grace and the minister should have a conference; and that his majesty should send a message to the duke desiring that he and Mr. Pitt should have an interview for the sake of forming a new administration. A message was accordingly sent to the duke of Portland, intimating his majesty's earnest desire that his grace should have a personal conference with Mr. Pitt for the purpose of forming a new administration on a wide basis, and on fair and equal terms. Before his grace would agree to the proposed meeting, he required an explanation of the term

[King's reply to the address for the removal of ministry.]

equal. Mr. Pitt replied that a personal conference would best explain specific objects; but the duke of Portland not being satisfied with this answer, refused to confer, and his refusal put an end to the negotiation.

The address for the removal of ministry was presented to the king on the 25th of February. His majesty in reply declared it to be the object nearest his heart, that the public affairs should be conducted by a firm, efficient, united and extended administration, entitled to the confidence of his people, and such as might have a tendency to put an end to the unhappy divisions and distractions of this country. He had employed very recent endeavours to unite in the public service, on a fair and equal footing, those whose joint efforts he thought the most fitted for producing so happy an effect: his endeavours had failed: he should be happy to embrace every measure most conducive to such an object, but could not perceive it would be forwarded by the dismissal of his present ministers. His majesty observed, that no charge or complaint was suggested by the house against those officers of the crown, whose removal they solicited; that no specific objection was made to any one or more of his servants; that great numbers of his subjects had expressed their warmest satisfaction with the late changes made in his councils; in these circumstances, he trusted, his faithful commons would not wish the essential offices of the executive government to be vacated, until there was a prospect that the desired plan of union could be carried into effect. The commons repeated their address in a more detailed form, and with still more urgent solicitation for the removal of ministers. His majesty's reply contained opinions and sentiments of the same important tendency as his former; and in the same temperate, firm, and dignified spirit, repeated the cogent and unanswerable argument; "You require the removal of my ministers, without alleging any charge of delinquency." Finding every attempt unavailing to induce the sovereign to sacrifice his choice of servants highly approved of by his people, to the mere will of the coalition party, unsupported by any constitutional reasoning, Mr. Fox proposed what he termed a representation, but really was a remonstrance to the sovereign; stating the privileges and power of the house, and the ancient practice of withholding supplies until grievances were redressed; and explaining the evils that would accrue to the country, if they exercised this right; that necessity only could justify its exertion; that such a necessity, arising from his majesty's advisers, did exist; and that the measures originating with these advisers, were altogether contrary to the principles and maxims by which the illustrious house of Hanover had reigned over this free country, in such harmony with the people, such prosperity and glory: for whatever consequences might result from the necessity imposed on the house of commons to assert its own rights, the advisers of the crown were responsible. The combination intimated in this statement being carried only by a majority of one, opposition did not think it advisable to contend for the refusal of the supplies. Their superiority had been gradually decreasing and they saw that if they attempted so strong a measure, they would be outvoted, and that the house of commons would at last concur with the majority of the nation. They became more and more sensible of their great and increasing unpopularity; and from this time, on the 9th of March, they appeared to have considered themselves as conquered. The opposition leaders had proposed, as a preventive of a dissolution, to move a short mutiny bill; but this design they now relinquished, and suffered the act to pass for the usual term; and all parties prepared for a speedy dissolution of parliament.

[Public estimation of the contending leaders.]

Thus terminated a contest between a powerful confederacy in the house of commons, and the executive government, supported by the confidence which the nation reposed in the talents and character of the principal minister. The coalition party defended the ground which it had assumed, and attacked administration with a force, impetuosity, concert, and perseverance, which must have overborne any minister, who did not unite abilities to see the means of defending a constitutional tenure, skill to apply them, and firmness to persist in maintaining what he conceived to be right against any combination of adversaries. A minister less powerful in reasoning, would have yielded to allegations so confidently urged, to sophistry so plausibly supported, or even to the very authority of such illustrious names. A minister, however endowed with intellectual superiority, unless also resolutely firm, would have rather conceded what he knew to be right, than maintained a contest with so numerous, forcible, and well disciplined a host, though he knew them to be wrong. Without a third advantage, a high degree of estimation with the public, success might have been uncertain. On the side of Mr. Fox there were consummate ability, intrepid boldness, fortified by a special confederacy. On the side of Mr. Pitt there were consummate ability, and firmness, and unquestioned character, which was fortified by no special combination, but increased, extended, and enlarged that general connexion which wisdom, virtue, and appropriate fame rarely fail to attach to a senator or statesman among an informed, distinguishing, and free people. Mr. Fox, though transcendent in genius, sought power by means which, during the two preceding reigns, had exalted several ministers of no genius. Mr. Pitt secured public confidence, and acquired power by personal qualities. But every impartial well-wisher to his country, while he rejoices that Britain acquired the executorial services of a Pitt, must no less regret that she lost the executorial services of a Fox.

While the chief attention of parliament had been occupied by these momentous subjects, several matters of subordinate importance were transacted. The receipt tax, meritorious as a financial measure, and productive without being burthensome, was, notwithstanding, very unpopular; and a motion was made for its repeal. Several substitutes were proposed; and among the rest, sir Cecil Wray moved a tax on maid servants, which produced laughable strictures rather than any serious consideration. The receipt tax was continued, and new penalties were annexed to enforce the imposts. A committee was appointed for inquiring into illicit practices to defraud the revenue; and Christopher Atkinson, esq. having been convicted of perjury, was expelled the house of commons. Previous to the dissolution of parliament, his majesty judged it expedient, in the particular circumstances of the case, to announce his intension of recurring to the sense of the people, and the reasons in which that intension was founded. His speech, as compressing the sentiments, opinions, objects, and motives of our sovereign, respecting the momentous subjects of the narrative just finished, is highly deserving of full citation: it was to the following effect: "My lords and gentlemen, on a full consideration of the present situation of affairs, and of the extraordinary circumstances which have produced it, I am induced to put an end to this session of parliament. I feel it a duty which I owe to the constitution and to the country, in such a situation, to recur as speedily as possible to the sense of my people, by calling a new parliament. I trust that this means will tend to obviate the mischiefs arising

[Dissolution of the parliament. Its character.]

from the unhappy divisions and distractions which have lately subsisted; and that the various important objects which will require consideration, may be afterwards proceeded upon with less interruption, and with happier effect. I can have no other object, but to preserve the true principles of our free and happy constitution, and to employ the powers intrusted to me by law for the only end for which they were given, to the good of my people." On the 24th of March, parliament was prorogued, and the next evening it was dissolved by proclamation.

Thus ended in its fourth year, a parliament, than which few assemblies either witnessed more changes in the executive administration, or exhibited a greater change of political character. The members had been elected at a session when the recent disturbances of 1780 repressed the spirit of opposition to government, from the apprehension, that if suffered to prevail, it might generate a discontent, eventually productive of similar outrages: and at a time when the sanguine hopes from unusual success obliterated former miscarriages. Disappointed expectations soon revived dissatisfaction, and the parliament which had been most devoted to lord North, became eager and active to drive him from his ministerial situation. The administration of lord North had been followed by the appointment of a set of men, from whom many of their countrymen expected the nation would derive signal benefit; but these hopes were overturned almost as soon as they were raised: the untimely death of lord Rockingham, and the unhappy misunderstandings that succeeded, speedily demolished the fabric. The administration of lord Shelburne passed almost entirely during the recess of parliament. It fell unfortunately to his lot to negotiate the terms of the general peace, which was signed at Versailles on the 20th of January 1783. Upon the assembling of parliament, this measure was the first object of their deliberations, and was judged to deserve a strong and severe censure. Those who had been most hostile at the commencement of parliament, now became most closely united. The professed friends of prerogative, and professed champions of the people, formed a coalition, which, in the third session of parliament established the fourth ministry. An imputed pursuit of perpetual dominion, in eight months, drove this party from power; and an early period of the fourth session saw a fifth ministry. Half of the fourth year was not passed when this body was dissolved. Having begun with the most obsequious assent to every requisition of ministers, it ended with questioning the most necessary prerogatives of the crown. Its character being stamped by its successive leaders, for two sessions it exhibited the dexterous but temporary expedients, the indecisive policy and indulgent profusion of lord North. In its third year, before the two parties were fully cemented and ability assumed its native superiority, it displayed a mixture of temporizing and decisive politics. In its fourth year, the supremacy of Mr. Fox being now established, its measures bore the stamp of the energy, promptness, decision, and adventurous boldness of that eminent statesman.





